



**Date:** December 17, 2025

**To:** Local Educational Agency Leads, Directors of Approved Private Schools for Students with Disabilities

**Route To:** High School Principals, Directors of Guidance, Directors of Special Education, Bilingual/ESL Coordinators, District Test Coordinators, Portfolio Appeals Coordinators

**From:** Jorden Schiff, Ed.D., Assistant Commissioner  
Division of Teaching and Learning Services

**Deadline:** Friday, May 1, 2026 (to ensure adequate processing time prior to graduation ceremonies)

## **Portfolio Appeals Process – Information and Updates for 2025-2026 Submissions**

The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) portfolio appeals process will continue to support a fully electronic submission process for the 2025-2026 school year. Local educational agencies (LEAs) and approved private schools for students with disabilities (APSSDs) may begin submitting portfolio appeals through the electronic submission process beginning **January 6, 2026**.

To fulfill the assessment component of the New Jersey high school graduation requirements, a student must demonstrate proficiency in both English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. Any eligible grade 12 student in the class of 2026, including students with disabilities and multilingual learners, who has taken the New Jersey Graduation Proficiency Assessment (NJGPA) may do this via three pathways as explained in the [Class of 2026 High School Graduation Assessment Requirements](#) webpage.

The portfolio appeals process provides an opportunity for students in the class of 2026 to meet the graduation assessment requirement. This memo explains the 2025-2026 portfolio appeals process, which is to be completed in accordance with *N.J.S.A. 18A:7C-3* and *N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1*, for students scheduled to graduate in spring 2026 who have taken the New Jersey Graduation Proficiency Assessment (NJGPA) and not yet met the state graduation assessment requirement for ELA and/or mathematics.

### **Reminders and Timelines**

#### ***Reminders for the 2025-2026 School Year***

The following reminders are provided for the 2025-2026 school year:

- Students with a qualifying ASVAB score may use the streamlined portfolio appeals option. Additional information about this option is shared in a [separate broadcast](#).
- Each school submitting a portfolio appeal must have their own Statement of Assurance (SOA) and their own Portfolio Appeals Data Spreadsheet. LEAs and APSSDs may not combine multiple schools' information on the same spreadsheet.
- LEAs and APSSDs must list the correct accountable district and school codes in the Portfolio Appeals Data Spreadsheet. The school code on the SOA, which may be different

from the accountable district and school code, will be used to generate portfolio appeal decision letters.

### ***Timelines***

Portfolio appeals must be submitted in accordance with the following timelines:

- The portfolio appeals submission process begins on **January 6, 2026**. LEAs and APSSDs may begin submitting the required documentation through [NJDOE Homeroom](#) on this date.
- All portfolio appeals must be submitted by **May 1, 2026**, to ensure decision letters can be sent in advance of June graduation ceremonies.
- LEAs and APSSDs will be notified of NJDOE decisions regarding their portfolio appeals submissions through NJDOE Homeroom on an ongoing basis.
- Portfolio appeals submitted **after May 1, 2026**, will still be reviewed; however, the NJDOE cannot guarantee that decisions will be communicated to the LEA or APSSD in time for a spring 2026 graduation ceremony.
- Submissions for class of 2026 summer graduates will be accepted until **August 26, 2026**.
- LEAs and APSSDs participating in the Seal of Biliteracy program are encouraged to submit portfolio appeals for eligible students as early as possible to facilitate timely verification of English language proficiency.

### ***Procedures***

#### ***Electronic Submission Process***

For the 2025-2026 school year, the NJDOE will be accepting portfolio appeals submissions electronically beginning **January 6, 2026**. The NJDOE will accept submissions **only** through this electronic submission process; paper submissions will not be accepted. In preparation for the electronic submission, each LEA and APSSD shall designate an individual to serve as the Portfolio Appeals Coordinator. This person must be assigned to the Portfolio Appeals project in NJDOE Homeroom, which will be available beginning on **January 6, 2026**. Within the Portfolio Appeals application in NJDOE Homeroom, the Portfolio Appeals Coordinator will find the templates that will need to be completed and submitted along with resources that will facilitate successful submission of files in NJDOE Homeroom.

The following templates will be available in NJDOE Homeroom and will need to be completed and uploaded to NJDOE Homeroom by LEAs and APSSDs that are submitting portfolio appeals for students in the class of 2026:

- Statement of Assurance (SOA) for Portfolio Appeals
  - Outlines the portfolio appeals requirements and expectations.
  - Requires the signatures of the Portfolio Appeals Coordinator, High School Principal, and Chief School Administrator to verify that the portfolio appeals process has been completed with integrity in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:7C-3 and N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1.
  - A separate SOA must be completed for each school within the LEA or APSSD each time a submission is made.
- Portfolio Appeals Data Spreadsheet
  - Provides LEAs and APSSDs with a standardized submission template and includes a variety of commonly used, required fields (e.g., Accountable District Code, State Student Identifier).
  - Includes ELA and mathematics specific fields for LEAs and APSSDs to submit students' scores on Constructed Response Tasks (CRTs).
  - A separate spreadsheet must be completed for each school within the LEA or APSSD.

- Please consult the December 17, 2025 broadcast “Streamlined Portfolio Appeals Option Added for Students with Qualifying ASVAB Scores” for additional information on the impact that the streamlined option has on the Portfolio Appeals Data Spreadsheet.

The following resources will also be available in NJDOE Homeroom to support LEAs and APSSDs in successfully completing and submitting the required files:

- Portfolio Appeals Submission Process for 2025-2026
  - Provides information on the electronic submission process.
  - Outlines in-district portfolio appeals documentation requirements.
- Portfolio Appeals Data Spreadsheet 2025-2026 Field Definitions
  - Provides the information needed to populate values in the Portfolio Appeals Data Spreadsheet.
  - Includes the field name, field length requirements, field definitions, field notes, and expected values.
- Portfolio Appeals Data Spreadsheet Sample
  - Provides a sample, complete spreadsheet for LEAs and APSSDs to review in combination with the field definitions document.
  - Includes sample data for different submission scenarios (e.g., ELA only submission, mathematics only submission, etc.).

### ***Locally Maintained Portfolio Appeals Documents***

LEAs and APSSDs are expected to store students’ completed portfolio appeals materials onsite in accordance with local document retention policies. A review of these documents may occur at the discretion of the NJDOE. Below is a list of the materials that must be maintained locally for each student:

- A completed Education Proficiency Plan (EPP) that includes the most current student transcript, documentation of performance on each component of the required New Jersey Graduation Proficiency Assessment (NJGPA) and any substitute competency assessments that may have been attempted, and an intervention plan implemented to ensure the student met the graduation assessment requirement.
- CRTs in the content areas (ELA and/or mathematics) in which the student has not met the graduation assessment requirement.
- The required quantity of a student’s scored responses to CRTs in each content area.
- A content-specific cover sheet for ELA and/or mathematics.

All documents related to the above materials will be found on the [Graduation Assessment Requirement](#) webpage under the section Third Pathway—Graduation Portfolio Appeal.

### **Technical Assistance Opportunities**

To support LEAs and APSSDs with the electronic submission process, technical assistance opportunities will be available on the following dates:

Session Date	Session Time	Registration Link
Tuesday, January 27, 2026	1 p.m. to 2 p.m.	<a href="#">Registration Link</a>
Wednesday, March 4, 2026	10 a.m. to 11 a.m.	<a href="#">Registration Link</a>
Thursday, April 23, 2026	1 p.m. to 2 p.m.	<a href="#">Registration Link</a>

The registration link for each session is included in the table above.

### **Reminder: CRT Requirements**

#### ***Requirements for the CRTs in ELA and Mathematics***

The CRTs are designed, administered, and scored locally. The CRTs must be designed to demonstrate that the student has core ELA and mathematical competencies equivalent to the expectations of the New Jersey Student Learning Assessments (NJSLA) and the NJGPA Evidence Statements which are linked within the informational guides. Please note that LEAs and APSSDs may use their existing CRTs for ELA and/or mathematics in the 2026 portfolio appeals process.

If an LEA or APSSD chooses not to use existing CRTs, the LEA or APSSD may use revised, refreshed, or newly created CRTs for the 2026 portfolio appeals process if the revised, refreshed, or newly created CRTs demonstrate that the student holds core competencies equivalent to the following:

- **For ELA CRTs:** The expectations of the NJSLA/NJGPA ELA Reading and Writing Evidence Statements for high school.
- **For Mathematics CRTs:** The expectations of the NJSLA/NJGPA Mathematics Reasoning (C) or Modeling (D) Evidence Statements for Algebra I, Geometry, and/or Algebra II.

### **ELA**

The following resources will be available for ELA on the [Graduation Assessment Requirement](#) webpage under the section Third Pathway—Graduation Portfolio Appeal:

- ELA: Informational Guide for Portfolio Appeals Process which provides content specific guidance.
- ELA: Portfolio Appeals Cover Sheet which provides the reading and writing cover sheets.

Please also note that writing must be scored using the ELA Scoring Rubrics linked within the informational guide.

### **Mathematics**

The following resources will be available for mathematics on the [Graduation Assessment Requirement](#) webpage under the section Third Pathway—Graduation Portfolio Appeal:

- Mathematics: Informational Guide for Portfolio Appeals Process which provides content-specific guidance.
- Mathematics: Portfolio Appeals Cover Sheet which provides the cover sheet template for mathematics.

### **Supporting Special Populations**

Students in special populations, such as multilingual learners and students with disabilities, are expected to participate in the portfolio appeals process and receive appropriate accommodations.

LEAs and APSSDs should, as appropriate and in accordance with the student's IEP, encourage students with disabilities to participate in the portfolio appeals process if they have not yet met the graduation assessment requirement for ELA and/or mathematics.

For multilingual learners, LEAs and APSSDs may translate CRTs into a student's native language, and the student may respond in their native language. The portfolio appeals process also allows for the use of electronic translators. The student's responses and the CRTs must be translated or

transcribed into English upon completion. The original student work and the translated or transcribed version must be retained with all other locally retained portfolio appeals documents.

For additional information and FAQs, review the Special Populations Guidance for Portfolio Appeals on the [Graduation Assessment Requirement](#) webpage under the section Third Pathway—Graduation Portfolio Appeal.

**Contact Information**

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

c: Members, State Board of Education  
NJDOE Staff  
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network  
Garden State Coalition of Schools  
NJ LEE Group