STATE OF NEW JERSEY
# DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

**Date:** November 10, 2026

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

**Route To:** High School Principals, Directors of School Counseling, Directors of Special Education, Bilingual/ESL Coordinators, District Test Coordinators, Portfolio Appeals Coordinators, English Language Arts and Mathematics Supervisors and Content Specialists

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Division of Academic Services

## Portfolio Appeals Process – Information and Updates for 2026-2027 Submissions

This memorandum provides local education agencies (LEAs) and approved private schools for students with disabilities (APSSDs) with key dates and information for the 2026-2027 portfolio appeals process. With the full implementation of the 2023 New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS) for English language arts (ELA) and mathematics and the rollout of the New Jersey Graduation Proficiency Assessment-Adaptive (NJGPA-A) in spring 2026, updates to the resources and guidance associated with the portfolio appeals process have been made to align with the new standards and assessment program. The key dates and actions steps are summarized here, while detailed information and resources are outlined in the pages that follow.

*Key Dates:*

- November 18, 2026: Last day to download class of 2026 outcome letters from the Portfolio Appeals Project in Homeroom.
- January 4, 2027: Submissions may begin
- May 3, 2027: Submission deadline to ensure adequate processing time prior to June graduation ceremonies
- August 26, 2027: Final submission deadline for class of 2027 summer graduates

*Action Steps:*

- Designate a portfolio appeals coordinator and ensure this individual has access to the Portfolio Appeal project in Homeroom.
- Download any class of 2026 outcome letters from the Portfolio Appeals project in Homeroom.
- Identify students who may need to participate in the portfolio appeals process.
- Review updated ELA and mathematics information guides.
- Audit existing constructed response tasks (“tasks”) for alignment to the 2023 NJSLS and updated requirements.
- Download, review, and prepare materials required for submission.

- Establish local procedures for documentation retention in alignment with provided guidance.
- Review guidance for supporting students with disabilities and multilingual learners.
- Train relevant staff on the updated requirements, timelines, and local procedures.

**Overview**

All students must satisfy the graduation assessment requirement in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:7C-6. To satisfy this requirement, a student must demonstrate proficiency in both ELA and mathematics as indicated by N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(a)7. Additional information is provided on the Class of 2027 High School Graduation Assessment Requirements webpage. Any eligible grade 12 student in the class of 2027, including students with disabilities and multilingual learners, who has taken the NJGPA-A and not achieved a passing score, may also submit through their district a Portfolio Appeal.

The 2026-2027 portfolio appeals process 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 2027 who have taken the NJGPA-A and not yet met the state graduation assessment requirement for ELA, mathematics or both.

**Updates, Reminders, and Timelines**

***Updates for the 2026-2027 School Year***

The following updates and reminders are provided for the 2026-2027 school year:

- In addition to the streamlined portfolio appeals option added in 2024-2025 for students with qualifying Department of Defense Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT) scores, students with an approved Industry-Valued Credential (IVC) or who completed a qualifying Work-Based Learning (WBL) experience may also use the streamlined portfolio appeals option. Additional information about this option is shared in a separate broadcast.
- The data collected in the Portfolio Appeals Data Spreadsheet has been streamlined and updated.
- The Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section has been expanded to include additional content and clarification regarding assessing multilingual learners in their native language.

***Reminders***

- 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 outcome letters.

***Timelines***

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

- The portfolio appeals submission process begins on **January 4, 2027**. LEAs and APSSDs may begin submitting the required documentation through the Portfolio Appeals project in NJDOE Homeroom on this date.
- All portfolio appeals must be submitted by **May 3, 2027**, to ensure decision letters can be sent in advance of June graduation ceremonies.

- Portfolio appeals submitted **after May 3, 2027**, will still be reviewed; however, the NJDOE cannot guarantee that decisions will be communicated to the LEA or APSSD in time for a June 2027 graduation ceremony.
- Submissions for class of 2027 summer graduates will be accepted until **August 26, 2027**.

**Procedures**

***Electronic Submission Process***

For the 2026-2027 school year, submissions will be accepted **only** through the electronic submission process; paper submissions will not be accepted. In preparation for the electronic submission, each LEA and APSSD must designate an individual to serve as the portfolio appeals coordinator. This person must be assigned to the Portfolio Appeals project in NJDOE Homeroom where electronic submissions will be made and outcome letters will be retrieved.

The following templates are available on the Graduation Assessment Requirement webpage and will need to be completed and uploaded to the Portfolio Appeals project in NJDOE Homeroom by LEAs and APSSDs that are submitting portfolio appeals for students in the class of 2027:

- Statement of Assurance (SOA) for Portfolio Appeals
- Portfolio Appeals Data Spreadsheet

The following resources are also available on the Graduation Assessment Requirement webpage to support LEAs and APSSDs in successfully completing and submitting the required files:

- Portfolio Appeals Submission Process for 2026-2027
- Portfolio Appeals Data Spreadsheet 2026-2027 Field Definitions
- Portfolio Appeals Data Spreadsheet Sample

***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. The list of materials that must be retained locally along with additional considerations for retention of documentation is available on the Portfolio Appeals Submission Process section of the Graduation Assessment Requirement webpage.

**Constructed Response Task Requirements and Updates**

***General requirements for ELA and Mathematics***

The tasks for ELA and mathematics will continue to be designed, administered, and scored locally. The tasks must be designed to demonstrate that the student has core ELA and mathematical competencies equivalent to the expectations of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS) for ELA and mathematics as outlined in the informational guides available on the Graduation Assessment Requirements webpage.

LEAs and APSSDs are encouraged to begin reviewing their existing tasks as early as possible and consider whether revisions are necessary. Please note, existing tasks may be used in the 2026-2027 portfolio appeals process if the tasks align to the requirements of the current portfolio appeals process and are aligned to the 2023 NJSLS.

***English Language Arts***

The ELA portfolio appeals process will continue to require locally-developed tasks focused on reading and writing. The following requirements will remain unchanged:

- Two grade-level reading passages (one literary and one informational) with associated questions that demonstrate student comprehension must be successfully completed.
- In reading, students must receive a passing score of at least 50 percent on each task (one literary task and one informational task) to meet the passing requirement.
- Students will be required to complete at least two writing tasks from the following writing types:
    - Informative/explanatory
    - Argumentative
    - Narrative

To more closely align with the updated state standards and the new assessment program, the following changes have been made to the requirements for ELA portfolio appeals beginning with the class of 2027:

- Tasks must be aligned to the Grades 9-10 2023 New Jersey Student Learning Standards for English Language Arts (NJSLS-ELA).
- Writing tasks should reflect the writing expectations outlined in the 2023 NJSLS-ELA.
- Writing tasks will be scored using NJGPA-A and NJSLA-A writing rubrics and require a minimum score of "3" on each rubric (composition and convention) to meet the passing requirement.

The following resources have been updated to reflect the current requirements for ELA portfolio appeals and are available on the Graduation Assessment Requirement webpage:

- 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.

**Mathematics Updates**

The mathematics portfolio appeals process will continue to require locally-developed tasks evidencing the mathematical practices aligned to the high school mathematics conceptual categories. The following requirements will remain unchanged:

- Students are required to successfully complete four (4) tasks, each of which must align to a unique conceptual category:
    - Number and Quantity (N)
    - Algebra (A)
    - Functions (F)
    - Geometry (G)
    - Statistics and Probability (S)
- Each of the completed tasks must also provide evidence from mathematical practices.
- Each task must include an item-specific rubric that allows for partial-credit scoring and at least half of the available points coming from mathematical practices.
- A task is worth a total of three (3), four (4), or six (6) points.

To more closely align with the updated state standards and the new assessment program, the following changes have been made to the requirements for mathematics portfolio appeals beginning with the class of 2027:

- Tasks must provide evidence from all three 2023 Standards for Mathematical Practice listed below:
    - 2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively.
    - 3. Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.
    - 4. Model with mathematics
- Tasks must also align to Algebra I, Geometry, or Algebra II content standards contained within the High School Mathematics Course Frameworks and Content Emphases.

The following resources have been updated to reflect the current requirements for mathematics portfolio appeals and are available on the Graduation Assessment Requirement webpage:

- 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 who have not yet met the graduation assessment requirement for ELA, mathematics or both must be afforded the same opportunity to participate in the portfolio appeals process as their peers. Multilingual learners and students with disabilities may also receive appropriate supports, such as unique scheduling considerations, if needed.

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, mathematics or both.

In accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(f), multilingual learners may demonstrate proficiency through passage of the portfolio appeals process in their native language, when available, and passage of a Department-approved English language proficiency (ELP) assessment. Additional information about assessing eligible multilingual learners in their native language is included in the FAQs section of the ELA and mathematics informational guides.

For additional information and FAQs about supporting special student populations, review the Special Populations Guidance for Portfolio Appeals on the Graduation Assessment Requirement webpage.

**Contact Information**

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