



For Immediate Release

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Contact: [Michael Yaple](#)

(609) 376-9072

New Jersey Department of Education Provides Updates on Statewide Student Assessments

Trenton, NJ – The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) on Wednesday provided the State Board of Education with state-level assessment results for 2019, as well as a plan to transition to the next generation of assessments.

The results, from the Spring 2019 administration of the New Jersey Student Learning Assessments (NJSLA) in mathematics and English Language Arts, are consistent with the previous year.

Five-year Trend of Assessment Results:

Percentage of NJ students who met or exceeded expectations in ELA and math

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
ELA	47.2	51.5	54.4	56.6	57.8
Mathematics	37.5	42.1	42.9	44.7	44.0

Note: Meeting or exceeding expectations is defined as scoring a Level 4 or 5 on the assessment.

The results from the statewide assessment also demonstrate that New Jersey has more work to do to ensure that all students have equitable access to post-secondary opportunities. Gaps persist among subgroups such as economically disadvantaged students, English language learners, and those with disabilities.

2019 NJSLA Results, by Subgroup:

Percentage of students who met or exceeded expectations in NJSLA math and ELA

	ELA	Mathematics
All students	57.8	44.0
African American	38.0	22.2
Asian	83.4	77.0
Hispanic	43.7	28.0
White	67.2	53.9
English Language Learners	29.0	24.0
Economically Disadvantaged	39.7	25.6
Students with Disabilities	21.6	16.6

Note: Because math and ELA assessments were optional for 11th graders in 2019, the data does not include student data from grade 11 so as to provide accurate trends across grades 3 to 10.

To address these issues, the Department has made several efforts designed to provide supports to teachers, and equitable access for all students:

- **Tools for teachers:** Recognizing that a high-quality teacher is considered the most important in-school variable to student success, the Department and other statewide education organizations collaborated over the past seven months to produce a series of “instructional units” to be used by teachers in mathematics and English Language Arts. The frameworks provide tools for educators to ensure their curriculum is aligned to the state’s learning standards.
- **Best practices:** The Department continues to highlight models of success through programs such as Lighthouse District awards that showcase schools that have made remarkable academic gains across diverse groups of students, and hosting the Department’s first-ever Equity for All conference that allowed dozens of districts to share best practices and quality programming.
- **Diversifying the workforce:** Recognizing that 56 percent of New Jersey’s students are children of color while only 16 of educators are teachers of color, the Department is striving to ensure the teacher workforce reflects the diversity among children in the classroom. To that end, the Department has championed grant initiatives to encourage more men, veterans and people of color explore the teaching workforce.
- **Tools to benefit students:** The Department has worked with districts to implement Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) practices that focus on educating the whole child. SEL refers to the way children acquire and apply the knowledge and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions; set positive goals; show empathy for others; and make reasonable decisions.
- **Post-secondary opportunities:** The Department has expanded efforts to get students ready for college by offering greater opportunities after high school. The state has fostered pre-apprenticeships, vocational programs that allow students to obtain an industry value credential, a greater focus on STEM offerings through the “Computer Science for All” initiative, and PTECH grants that help schools work with industry and colleges to help students receive a high-school and an Associate degree.

The state-level summary reports are on the NJDOE’s [Statewide Assessments webpage](#). The district-level and school-by-school results are expected to be available on the webpage in the fall, when school boards discuss results at public meetings and parents receive their child’s score reports.

Transition to Next Generation Statewide Assessments

The Department on Wednesday also provided an updated timeline to transition to the next generation assessments. The Department aims to maintain high academic standards, support districts to provide students with an equitable access to a high-quality education, and ensure the state assessment system evolves incrementally and fairly. The Department aims to develop the assessments with input from New Jersey educators, provide accommodations to students who need them, ensure test security, and utilize technology that can provide educators and parents with clear blueprints to the state’s learning standards.

The early steps in the transition included:

- Testing time was reduced by approximately 25 percent from the previous year’s PARCC assessment.
- The shortened test covered the same standards and maintained the year-over-year comparability of the data.
- The assessments were renamed NJSLA (New Jersey Student Learning Assessments) to reflect the end of the PARCC consortium.

Major milestones of the Department's anticipated implementation timeline include:

- **2019-20:** NJDOE issues requests for proposals for the new generation of assessments
- **2021-22:** Field test the next generation of assessments in grades 3-9, and administer the 11th grade graduation assessment (by court order, the NJDOE is required to administer an 11th grade graduation assessment for the Class of 2023 and beyond).
- **2022-23:** Full implementation of the next generation of assessments

The update to the State Board comes with the understanding that elements of the plan may need to be adjusted due to variables throughout the procurement and implementation process.

As implementation progresses, the NJDOE will continue its stakeholder engagement – which, to date, has included the input of more than 2,000 students, teachers and school officials, along with working groups that included educators from 151 districts in all 21 counties.

(Updated September 5)