



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

December 5, 2017

To: Chief School Administrators, Charter School and Renaissance School Project Leads
Route To: Directors of Special Education
From: John Worthington, Director
Office of Special Education Policy and Procedure
Deadline: January 5, 2018

Application to Exceed the Cap on Students Taking Alternate Proficiency Assessment

School districts, charter schools and renaissance school projects are required to submit to the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) a justification form if they expect to exceed the 1 percent cap on the number of students with significant intellectual disabilities who are administered the state alternate assessment.

Background

In December 2015, the *Elementary and Secondary School Act (ESEA)* was reauthorized through the adoption of the *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)*. As in the past, *ESSA* regulations allow the use of alternate assessments, based on alternate achievement standards, for students with the most significant intellectual disabilities. In New Jersey, the alternate assessment is the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM). Note, *ESSA* requires that no more than 1 percent of the total number of students *in the state* may be administered the DLM. Feedback on a waiver for this statewide limit is included in the December 5 Broadcast.

Application Guidelines and Criteria

A Local Education Agency (LEA) may assess more than 1 percent of their students with the DLM, but if they anticipate participation in the DLM will exceed 1 percent of the total population of tested students for the 2017-18 school year, the LEA must submit a justification for the need to assess more than 1 percent of students with the DLM. The [DLM Justification Form](#) must be submitted to the NJDOE no later than **January 5, 2018**.

Calculating participation: Guidelines for calculating the DLM participation rate can be found on the justification form and must be calculated by the district prior to submission. It is important to include students placed in separate public programs in other LEAs in these calculations.

Criteria for DLM participation: The [DLM-New Jersey website](#) contains DLM participation criteria for the 2017-18 school year. Child study teams must make individualized decisions for each student with regard to participation in statewide assessments. It is imperative that only those students who truly meet the DLM participation criteria take part in the assessment. To ensure that LEAs are using the required criteria, the signature of the chief school administrator or charter/renaissance school lead person is required on the DLM justification.

When assessment results are finalized, a review of the application of the criteria will be conducted in a selection of LEAs that have high DLM participation rates.

Contact Information

Questions regarding the DLM Justification form may be directed to Kimberly Murray at (609) 376-9060, and DLM justification forms should be emailed to her at Kimberly.murray@doe.state.nj.us.

c: Members, State Board of Education
Kimberley Harrington, Commissioner
NJDOE Staff
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network
Garden State Coalition of Schools
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