

**Examination and Testing, New Jersey Assessment of Skills and  
Knowledge (NJ ASK): Grades 3-8  
2006-X-38041**

**Addendum 3**

**Question #1.      Regarding the formative assessment piece of the RFP, will NJ allow vendors to bid on the formative assessment as a stand alone service separate from the NJ ASK testing?**

Answer: No.

**Question #2.      Who is the incumbent contractor for subject RFP?**

Answer: The incumbent contractor for NJ ASK 3-4 is Educational Testing Service (ETS). The incumbent contractor for grade 8 (GEPA) is Pearson Educational Measurement (PEM).

**Question #3.      The RFP refers to constructed response items and to open-ended items. Is there a distinction or are those terms being used interchangeably?**

Answer: These terms are used interchangeably.

**Question #4.      Could the State provide the item counts in their NJASK 3/4 and GEPA item pools by reporting category?**

Answer: Not at this time.

**Question #5.      Section 1.2 states there are approximately 105,000 students tested at each grade level. From summary reports on the NJ website, we see that in Grade 8, for example, the GEPA was administered to 110,270 students in 2004. Should we budget for more than 105,000?**

Answer: The 105,000 figure is an approximation given for evaluation purposes only. Bidders are to provide a firm fixed unit price per student. The contractor shall be paid according to the actual number of student tested at each grade level each year.

**Question #6.      Section 1.2 and throughout the RFP, the various components of the LAL assessment are described. Can you share how those components are combined to create an LAL score? Are the proficiency standards set on the total of LAL, as opposed to Reading and Writing?**

Answer: Yes, the proficiency standards are set on the total of LAL.

**Question #7.      Was it intended to have a Spanish language Science test for grade 6 as referenced on page 102?**

Answer: No, science will be tested at grades 4 and 8 only, under this contract

**Question #8.** **Section 1.2 states "...the reduction in the number of open-ended items in mathematics and science..." while page 30 Section 3.6 states "... the elimination of open-ended items in mathematics and science..." Is it NJDOE's intent to reduce the number of open-ended items or is it NJDOE's intent to eliminate all open-ended items? If reduction is the intent, how many open-ended items per subject does NJDOE want on the new assessments?**

Answer: Section 3.6 should say "reduction," not elimination. Section 3.3.5 presents a projected test design, including anticipated numbers of open-ended item per grade per content area.

**Question #9.** **Section 3.1, there is a reference to "accountability reports". Do you imagine these reports in electronic or paper form? For each school, district, state? Applying NJ's criteria for AYP determinations?**

Answer: See section 3.12 Score Reporting for a detailed explanation of reporting deliverables.

**Question #10.** **Section 3.1, briefly describes criteria for reporting student results. Can you share a current model of a student report?**

Answer: Yes refer to the following link:  
<http://www.ets.org/njask/pdfs/njask2005manual.pdf>

**Question #11.** **Section 3.2.9, speaks about fairness standards. Is there a separate committee that reviews items for fairness? Does that responsibility lie with the Content Committees? Or, is this just a contractor responsibility?**

Answer: At present there is a separate fairness/sensitivity committee that reviews LAL passages and prompts, and items from all content areas that have been flagged for item analysis protocols. The NJDOE's preference is to maintain a formal fairness review process, without maintaining a separate committee devoted exclusively to that purpose. Bidders should either propose an alternative mechanism or structure, perhaps within the content committees, or propose a separate committee protocol that is both cost effective and true to the department's goal of ensuring the fairness of test content.

**Question #12.** **Section 3.2.10, requests a plan for the annual release of items. Do you have a target pace in mind for refreshing items on the test? Will a certain percentage of items be replaced each year? Will a test be used for two years and then retired? Will there be a completely new test each year?**

Answer: There will not be a completely new test each year; and the

department intends the cost-effective re-use of test forms and test items to the degree compatible with the integrity and validity of the tests. As the RFP indicates, the NJDOE seeks a plan for annual release of test items that is compatible with the bidder's approach to formative assessment. The NJDOE acknowledges that the number of test items released each year be contingent on the proposals for training and formative assessment.

**Question #13. What is meant by the term "enhanced features" when it is stated that the Formative Assessment system "may - but is not required to - allow for enhanced features for which local districts can contract with the contractor directly"?**

Answer: Enhanced features refers to additional modular components to the formative assessment which the contractor may offer for purchase to local districts directly, provided that the core formative assessment deliverables described in the RFP have been developed and made operational.

**Question #14. Both the writing prompts and the open-ended reading items for the LAL are administered in winter (Jan/Feb). Are the open-ended math and science also administered in the winter or are they administered in spring with the multiple choice items?**

Answer: Only the LAL tests would be bifurcated in that manner.

**Question #15. Section 3.3.3, indicates that the LAL test should have a sufficient number of items to produce both reading and writing scores? In the test design information that is provided, it appears that there is only one writing prompt. Do you anticipate other items that address writing skills?**

Answer: It is the department's belief that the administering of a writing assessment task every year at each grade level reduces the need for multiple writing tasks, as is the case currently at grades 3, 4, and 8 only. It is the bidder's responsibility either to propose a test development and score reporting design that can provide meaningful writing assessment under those terms, or propose a persuasive alternative design.

**Question #16. Section 3.3.3, indicates that the multiple-choice Reading Comprehension questions will be administered in March-April. In another place March-May, and in another place April-May. Please clarify.**

Answer: The NJDOE has not been in a position to establish firm dates for the grade 5-7 assessments in 2006. The bifurcated LAL design, moreover, will be a new feature of the testing system, presenting additional implications for assessment scheduling. In addition, the capacity of bidders to accelerate score reporting will affect scheduling considerations. The NJDOE expects that establishing testing dates for grades 5-7 for 2006, and for all grades in 2007, will be high on the agenda for the first planning meeting with the new contractor.

**Question #17.** **Section 3.3.4, refers to a hierarchy of groups of Science content. That is, 1) Science; 2) Science Reasoning and Science Knowledge; 3) 10 Science standards; and 4) specific strands within the standards. At what level of detail are you wishing to report on student performance? Can you address the same question in the other content areas?**

Answer: The NJDOE wishes its score reporting to be as informative as possible, on both the individual and aggregate levels, to the degree compatible with psychometric standards and readable, usable reporting.

**Question #18.** **Section 3.3.7, the NJDOE reserves the right to make the assessments for grades 5 through 7 operational, and will make a final decision by Sept. 30, 2006. Should the year in that date be 2005?**

Answer: Yes.

**Question #19.** **Section 3.5 Rangefinding - How many participants per grade/subject will be included in the rangefinding sessions? How many days does NJDOE project will be required for the rangefinding activities?**

Answer: One NJDOE content specialist and 2-3 NJ teachers would represent the NJDOE in rangefinding, in addition to contractor content and scoring experts. Currently, rangefinding for LAL can require 20-25 days per program each year; for math and science, this is 10-15 days.

**Question #20.** **Section 3.6, the NJDOE plans to eliminate the OE items in math and science. However, the blueprints indicate that there are CR items. This appears to be a contradiction.**

Answer: See answer to question #8 above.

**Question #21.** **Section 3.7.1.2, requests Parents' Guides, but the quantities are unclear. Is it really 105,000 documents to cover grades 5-7. That's only enough for one grade level of testers. And, in 2006-07, does the number increase to 105,000 per grade or per grade range (e.g., 3-5)?**

Answer: A Parent Guide should be produced for each student being tested, or approximately 105,000 per grade level.

**Question #22.** **Section 3.7.1.1, requests Directories of Test Specifications, but the quantities are unclear. Should we interpret this as a total of 600 copies per grade, including 300 for the NJDOE? And, approximately how many pages are required for each grade?**

Answer: The NJDOE will require 600 copies of each set of printed test specifications, for distribution to the districts, with printable electronic versions available on the program web site. The contractor may make

recommendations for the format and organization of the test specifications; e.g., whether to produce separate test specifications for each content area encompassing all grades, or to organize them separately by grade level. Current test specifications for most NJ assessments are available on the NJDOE web site.

**Question #23.** **Section 3.7.1.3, is it correct that 5,000 Student/Teacher Information Pamphlets will be required in 2005-06 to cover grades 5-7? Is it also correct that in 2006-07, 15,000 will be required, 5,000 for each of the 3 grade ranges?**

Answer: The correct figure is 105,000 per grade level, or one per student.

**Question #24.** **Section 3.7.2.2, requests scannable answer folders for the spring assessment for grades 5-8. Should we assume that there is another set of answer folders required for the winter assessment and that a system will be required to link the two? Also, will Pre-ID labels be required for both administrations?**

Answer: Yes to both.

**Question #25.** **1) Section 3.7.2.6, it appears that there is a requirement to have two operational forms, the primary form and the breach form. Is it acceptable for the same breach form to be used for the entire contract? 2) Also, for makeup testing, is the primary form or breach form used, or is there a third form used for the makeups?**

Answer: 1) No. 2) The primary form.

**Question #26.** **Section 3.7.2.6 Alternate Test Booklet Form - The contractor shall produce an alternate test booklet form of the tests for each administration for use when test security breaches occur. Are the reporting requirements the same for breach administrations as regular administrations?**

Answer: In practice, when breaches arising from district error occur, the department is chiefly concerned to arrange for the breach test administration, as appropriate, and to provide resulting individual student scores and score labels. The delays caused by breaches sometimes mean that the breach test scores cannot be included in the district/school aggregate reports.

**Question #27.** **Section 3.7.3.1- Regular and Make-Up Header Sheets - Production specifications: 9/2 x 11 continuous, four color, color corner, 24 pound paper. Is the NJDOE open to header sheets in other than four color?**

Answer: Yes.

**Question** **Section 3.7.3.2, asks the vendor to accommodate responses on**

**#28. loose sheets for certain students. Can you give an approximate quantity of such responses per grade in each administration?**

Answer: A reasonable approximation would be 75% of the special education testing population, or about 3500-4000 per grade level.

**Question #29. Irregularity Report Envelopes. Can NJDOE provide an estimate of the numbers of students who will need accommodations that allow for additional sheets outside the answer document?**

Answer: The actual question here appears to duplicate 27 above; as for Irregularity Reports, bidders may assume that approximately 2000-3000 per year per grade level are submitted by districts.

**Question #30. Section 3.8.1, indicates that the NJDOE will review and approve the camera-ready copy of all test booklets, etc. Should we anticipate that the NJDOE will also require review time for earlier drafts of the documents, or only the final camera-ready copy?**

Answer: Yes, NJDOE staff will participate in earlier stages of the review process as part of the item development process.

**Question #31. Section 3.9, describes a need for special seals on the Grade 8 test materials. Is this procedure only required for Grade 8?**

Answer: Because it is established by state statute and because of its function as an early warning test, relative to the High School Proficiency Assessment, the NJDOE considers the security of the grade 8 test to be of particular importance, thus justifying the seals. The NJDOE expects bidders to devise and propose methods for assuring the security of the test booklets for the other grade levels, without resort to seals. Barring a satisfactory substitute, the bidders may propose and the department may accept a plan that calls for sealing all test booklets.

**Question #32. Section 3.9.8 indicates that test materials should ship within two days of the end of testing. Section 3.9.9 indicates that test booklets shall be returned at the end of the week of make-up testing. Can you make that clearer?**

Answer: The contractor should arrange for the pick up by overnight carriers of used and unused scannable test booklets (grades 3-4) and answer folders (grades 5-8) within two days of the last scheduled makeup testing day. These arrangements include the training of districts in the procedures for readying testing materials for overnight return to the contractor. Grade 5-8 test booklets (not answer folders) would, under normal conditions, be picked up by truck courier for return to the vendor.

**Question #33. Section 3.9.9, requires that test booklets be shipped overnight. Is that requirement for answer folders and test booklets in Grades 5-8?**

**Answer: See response to question #32.**

**Question #34. Section 3.11 Are representatives of the NJDOE on-site for training and/or scoring of the writing and open-ended items? If so, how many representatives and for how many days? and, is the contractor responsible for costs related to their travel, etc.?**

Answer: NJDOE representatives participate in rangefinding and collaborate with contractor staff in selecting appropriate rangefinding materials; NJDOE representatives are not normally on site during the actual scoring or training of scorers.

**Question #35. Section 3.12 describes many different reporting components. Can you be clear about which reporting components are required to be complete by June 1?**

Answer: All individual score reporting and basic school/district performance summary reporting must be completed by June 1. These correspond to the Cycle I or "first phase" reports described in this section. It is the desire of the NJDOE that all reporting, individual and aggregate, electronic or paper, be completed as soon as possible.

**Question #36. Section 3.12.2 specifies a record change period of five weeks that begins 10 weeks prior to the release of student score reports. Since that could potentially be before testing is completed, we are assuming that the data review is of only demographic information. Can you please confirm?**

Answer: Yes: under current practice, the record change process occurs subsequent to testing and prior to score reporting.

**Question #37. Section 3.12.2 Record Change. Are the record changes for enrollment and demographic changes only?**

Answer: Normally, yes.

**Question #38. 1) Section 3.12.2.1 Automatic rescoring. Are we to assume that the rescore of open-ended items in reading will not occur until after the spring administration of the multiple choice reading items has occurred and those scores are merged with the open-ended reading scores from the winter administration? 2) Also, does this apply to the writing prompts, and, if so, are there any multiple choice items that contribute to the writing cut score?**

Answer: 1) Yes. 2) Yes, it applies to writing prompts; no, the NJDOE does not envision multiple choice items contributing to the writing score. Section 3.12.3, is there a reason that grade 4 is omitted?

**Question #39. Section 3.12.3, is there a reason that grade 4 is omitted?**

Answer: The text in the first sentence should read "all score reports for

grades 3-8.”

**Question #40.** **Section 3.12.8.4, does “single-section roster” mean a roster that contains only one subject area?**

Answer: Yes.

**Question #41.** **Section 3.12.9.1 asks for paper copies of aggregate score reports. Throughout much of the RFP, it seemed that only individual student reports were required on paper, and others were required electronically. Can you specify which reports will be required on paper and in what quantities?**

Answer: Only individual students reports and labels are to be printed; all other reporting is to be in electronic or web-based form, in formats suitable for printing at the local level. The contractor may expect that, in unusual cases, printed copies of some reports may be requested by the NJDOE.

**Question #42.** **Section 3.12.9.5 refers to the Alternate Proficiency Assessment whose data will be merged with data from the NJ ASK. Will the contractor be expected to merge the APA results into the Accountability Report. That is, when the percent proficient is reported on that report will it include those students whose proficiency is determined by the APA?**

Answer: No, however the contractor will be required to provide merged data file described in this section.

**Question #43.** **Section 3.14.4 requires that test booklets be stored for one year. Does that requirement also apply to answer folders?**

Answer: Yes.

**Question #44.** **Sections 3.14.6.4, specifies a method of investigating and adjusting for rater effects from one year to the next. 1) Can you estimate the number of previous year papers should be “seeded” into the scoring for this purpose? 2) Are you open to other methods of ensuring that rater effect is not an issue?**

Answer: 1) No. 2) Yes.

**Question #45.** **Section 3.14.6.5 describes an extensive set of analyses that would be included in a technical report. How many technical reports will be required?**

Answer: The NJDOE envisions, in keeping with current practice, one technical report for each grade level; however, bidders may propose alternatives.

**Question #46.** **Section 4.4.2.2, indicates an interest in translating the test and related publications into the other most common non-English languages. How many most common non-English languages are**

**you talking about?**

Answer: Aside from Spanish, two or three: Portuguese, Gujarati, Haitian Creole, possibly Russian. The requirement here is for a feasibility study only.

**Question #47.** **Section 4.4.2.2, the available items are described. When items are listed in the Operational Pool, does that mean they have been used operationally or they are ready to be used? When items are listed in the Field Test Pool, does that mean they have been field tested or they are ready to be field tested?**

Answer: Operational items have either been approved for operational use or used in an operational test one or more times; field test items have been approved for field-testing or used on an actual field-test form.

**Question #48.** **What percentage of newly developed items for Math will have art? (Please be specific by grade).**

Answer: This is to be determined after contractor award: at present, typically: 40-50% of grade 3-4 math items currently include some kind of non-textual graphic (e.g., clip art like renderings of houses, as well as tables or graphs) At grade 8, the percentage is much lower, consisting almost exclusively of tables, graphs, and charts.

**Question #49.** **What percentage of newly developed Reading passages will have art? (Please be specific by grade).**

Answer: This is to be determined after contract award; typically, most reading passages are accompanied by some kind of art or graphic.

**Question #50.** **Can the vendor recreate art for newly developed Reading passages?**

Answer: Yes.

**Question #51.** **What is the length of time for permissions on newly developed Reading passages to be secured?**

Answer: NJDOE typically relies on the contractor to be responsible for the permissions process and its effect on item development.

**Question #52.** **What is the number of items in the NJ bank by grade and content area?**

Answer: See "Use of NJ ASK 3/4 and GEPA Item Pools" in Section 4.4.2.2 of the RFP.

**Question #53.** **What is the number of passages in the NJ bank by grade?**

Answer: See "Use of NJ ASK 3/4 and GEPA Item Pools" in Section 4.4.2.2 of the RFP.

**Question #54. Will the passages in the NJ bank need to have permissions acquired? How many?**

Answer: For the most part no: permissions are secured for operational pool items and most field-test pool items. Details of the permissions will be made available to the contractor following contract award.

**Question #55. What is the percentage of art for the Math items in the NJ bank by grade?**

**Answer: See response to question #48.**

**Question #56. What is the percentage of art for the Reading passages in the NJ bank by grade? Is this art permissioned?**

**Answer: See response to question #49 and 54.**

**Question #57. How will NJ turn over the existing items to the new contractor? (Including file formats, art pieces, and permissions)?**

Answer: They will be turned over to the new contractor in the form that we have them, which would include electronic files of test items, graphics, and manuals.

**Question #58. Will the new contractor develop material to pilot in 2006 or will the new contractor be piloting materials that have already been developed?**

Answer: Depending on contract award date, it is possible that the grade 5-7 tests in 2006 will have to be populated largely by pre-existing item content, aligned to New Jersey standards, that the contractor brings to the contract for review and approval by the NJDOE. The essential requirement is that any item used on a New Jersey assessment be genuinely aligned with the CCCS.

**Question #59. Section 3.3.7 Field Testing, NJDOE expects that its assessments in grades 5-7 for 2005/2006 school years will be field tests. However, the following sentence states "... the contractor shall administer operational grade 5-7 tests in the 2005/2006 school year." Does that mean the field test items could be embedded in the operational forms and not be field tested alone?**

Answer: As the RFP notes, the NJDOE expects, in keeping with standard testing practice, that the new assessments in grades 5-7 would be field tests for the first year, 2006; however, as the RFP notes, the NJDOE awaits further guidance from the USED as to whether this plan is acceptable. In the event that it is not acceptable to the federal government, the contract must be prepared to provide full operational scoring and reporting for these tests in 2006. The NJDOE hopes to make this determination by September 30,

2005.

**Question #60.** Page 49, the very beginning sentence states "The technical report shall also include a comparison of the characteristics of the current test administration to those of previous administrations." Since different test vendors might be involved, would NJDOE help facilitate or communicate with vendors about previous data or statistics transition so the new contractor can do such comparison?

Answer: Previous technical reports would be made available to the new contractor for this purpose.

**Question #61.** 1) Section 3.14.6.5 point 1 - Classical and IRT measures of reliability and standard errors for total scores and sub-scores. Does that mean, domain score or strand score on IRT base is expected? 2) Section 3.14.6.2 DIF requests two procedures. However, page 52 3.14.7.3 seems to request Mantel-Haenzel only. Please clarify.

Answer: The NJDOE will accept Mantel-Haenzel only, provided that the contractor continues to review and monitor its application of DIF analysis procedures using the M-H model.

**Question #62.** Section 3.14.7.4, bullet two, by item efficiency analysis, do you mean plots of the item information functions? If not, please clarify.

Answer: By item efficiency analysis, the NJDOE means contractor analysis of item performance relative to discriminating between high ability and low ability students.

**Question #63.** Section 3.18 Additional data analyses/conference support. We assume NJDOE will communicate with new contractor about what would be additional analyses in terms of scope and timeline and deliverables.

Answer: Yes, this deliverable refers only to additional data analysis needs of a limited and specific nature, of a sort that cannot be formally anticipated. In form they would be informal, readable reports, spreadsheets, and data files.

**Question #64.** Can retired items be used as public release items? What is the reuse policy for Multiple Choice and Open Ended items? How frequently and how often may items be reused before they are retired?

Answer: NJDOE does not set limits on the number of times an item may be used, provided that the items remains aligned with state CCCS and otherwise compatible with test specifications. Retired items may be used as public

release items, provided they were not retired for being incompatible with the test specifications.

**Question #65. How many open-ended reading comprehension items are there at each grade?**

Answer: This is to be determined following contract award; a reasonable estimate would be 2-3 each for grades 3-7; possibly 3-4 for grade 8.

**Question #66. What is an acceptable format for the item pools?**

Answer: This will be determined in consultation with the contractor following contract award, when the contractor gains access to the NJDOE owned item pools.

**Question #67. Please identify all mathematics manipulatives for each grade level. Please clarify whether the Mathematics Reference Sheet and manipulatives are on the same sheet or whether the reference sheet and manipulatives are separate documents.**

Answer: For grades 3-4, the math reference sheet contains 12 colored (four colors) punch out manipulatives, as well as punch out ruler, on card stock; for grade 8, the math reference sheet contains approximately 22 items, all of them formulas except for a punch out ruler.

**Question #68. Please provide a breakdown, by grade and content area, for production of the 2500 copies of the Spanish-language version. How many districts/schools will the Non-English version be shipped to? Further, the RFP states that ancillary materials, scoring and reporting will be required for non-English versions. Please specify quantity for each of these requirements.**

Answer: Bidders may anticipate that, in the event that NJDOE authorizes Spanish language testing, Spanish language test booklets and ancillary materials (e.g, Examiner Manual) may need to be shipped to every district in the State, in very small quantities to some districts, much larger quantities to others. Bidders should review available data and information about the State's LEP student population that is contained on the NJDOE web site. The underlying goal would be to assure the validity of the Spanish languages versions by supporting them with equivalent, not necessarily identical, training, administrative, and informational materials.

**Question #69. 1) Is a writing prompt released each year? 2) Is parental permission required for the student responses selected for the Writing Handbook? 3) If yes, will the NJDE be responsible for secure parental permission?**

Answer: 1) Yes, usually 2) Yes 3) No

**Question #70. Section 3.15 "NJ Ask Item Banks" and section 4.4.2.2 "Contract Management":**

1. **Does New Jersey have an existing item bank? If so, what is the format of the bank, and the items contained within it?**
2. **Are the items described on page 61 under "Use of NJ Ask3/4 and GEPA Item Pools" contained within an item bank? If so, please provide details.**
3. **In what format will the items described on page 61 be passed over to the contractor?**

Answer: Yes, NJ ASK 3/4 and GEPA item banks were developed under separate contracts involving separate vendors; therefore, the format of these item banks differ somewhat. The item banks will be turned over to the new contractor in the form in which we have them, which includes electronic files of most materials.

**Question #71. At what time of year was the LAL administered prior to the bifurcation of the LAL assessment?**

Answer: The NJ ASK was administered March 14-18, 2005 (regular) and March 21-24, 2005 (make-up)

**Question #72. Will we have a split administration to administer the 2006 5-6-7 field test, or will it be just one administration?**

Answer: If "split administration" refers to the bifurcated LAL test described in the RFP, yes, the NJDOE wishes to implement that design with the grade 5-7 field tests in 2006.

**Question #73. In Section 1.2 (Background) the RFP, states that Grades 3, 4, and 8 will be implemented in the 2006-2007 administrative year. The existing GEPA (Grade 8) passage lengths are 1,500 to 3,200 words in length. • When GEPA is rolled into the program in 2006-2007 will the students respond to passages of the current length or will they respond to shorter length passages? • Will shorter length passages need to be tested in 2006?**

Answer: The existing GEPA passages may continue to be used until passages of the prescribed shorter length can be phased into the grade testing program.

**Question #74. Are all Open Ended responses in all subjects to have 10% read-behinds?**

Answer: Yes.

**Question #74. Is it acceptable for program source code to be held in escrow?**

Answer: Yes.

**Question #76. Page 19 section 3.2.7 requires that the contractor provide all source code at the end of the contract. Please clarify "source**

**code". We are unclear as to whether or not this is related to systems work and if so, what work?**

Answer: Source code here refers to non-proprietary programming code developed specifically to support the New Jersey testing program and constituent components.

**Question #77. The RFP states in Section 3.3.3 "Each passage shall be based on a different text type; either narrative, informational, or persuasive..... In addition to the multiple-choice items, there shall be open-ended items for each text type in which students respond by writing their answers to the questions." There are 3 passage types listed, but the design in 3.3.5 has 1 passage for the winter assessment and 4 passages for the spring assessment.**

- 1. Will all grade levels have all 3 passage types on both the winter and spring assessments?**
- 2. If so, when will the new passage types be field tested?**
- 3. If not, what passage types are desired for each grade level?**
- 4. Also on the spring assessment, assuming 2 passages of some passage types are being assessed, is there be any specific guidance by grade level as to which?**

Answer: 1-4) To be determined following contract award. Bidders are encouraged to review section 1.2 "Background" of the RFP.

**Question #78. Section 3.3.3 states, "All such reading passages.....should normally range from 700-1800 words." Is there a target word count for each grade level?**

Answer: No, these specifications are to be refined by the NJDOE in collaboration with the contractor, following contract award.

**Question #79. Page 26 of the RFP states that writing responses shall be scored holistically on a scale of 1 to 6. At the present time for grades 3 and 4 writing responses are scored on a scale of 1 to 5. Does DOE expect additional rangefinding activities due to this difference?**

Answer: Grade 3-4 responses will continue to use the 1-5 scale; grade 8 will continue to use the 1-6 scale, as is used on the HSPA. Bidders may recommend an appropriate scale for grades 5, 6, and 7.

**Question #80. Regarding the LAL summary designs, what is the expected number of constructed response items associated with the reading passage at each grade level? (Note: This may be an internal question related to item development/test design.)**

Answer: 2-3; however, to be determined following contract award. Bidders are encouraged to review section 1.2 "Background" of the RFP.

**Question The RFP refers to "writing prompts." In Grade 8, for example,**

**#81. students respond to picture prompts and persuasive writing prompts. By grade-level, what kind of writing prompts will be in the test design?**

Answer: To be determined following contract award. Bidders are encouraged to review section 1.2 "Background" of the RFP.

**Question #82. During the January assessment (constructed response), is the field test section to include writing prompts and a reading passage with multiple choice and constructed response items? • If not, how and when are the reading passages with constructed response items field tested?**

Answer: To be determined following contract award. Bidders are encouraged to review section 1.2 "Background" of the RFP.

**Question #83. 1) How many multiple choice and constructed-response items per passage are included on the winter assessment for each grade? • How, if at all, do the multiple choice items on the winter assessment differ from those on the spring assessment?**

Answer: 1) To be determined following contract award. Bidders are encouraged to review section 1.2 "Background" of the RFP. 2) They do not differ.

**Question #84. How many OE items are to be scored for each subject for each grade?**

Answer: To be determined following contract award. Bidders are encouraged to review section 1.2 "Background" of the RFP.

**Question #85. Please clarify a potential discrepancy in the RFP. Page 29, #3.3.8, says that NJDOE does not require ownership of test items under this contract. Page 75, 5.12, says that NJDOE owns everything developed under this contract and page 55, #3.19.3 gives a third definition of ownership.**

Answer: The text of Section 3.3.8 accurately represents the NJDOE's position on ownership of test items. Section 3.19.3 includes allowance for the exception represented by Section 3.3.8.

**Question #86. Would the field test portion of the Spanish test be handled similarly to the way the large print forms are handled?**

Answer: Yes.

**Question #87. For the Spanish language test, would the OE Spanish and Math responses be in Spanish and the LAL responses be exclusively in English?**

Answer: The LAL responses would be in Spanish; however, a detailed policy for non-English language testing will be developed by the NJDOE in the event it decides to move forward with Spanish versions of the tests.

**Question #88. How long should item development and test build paperwork be retained?**

Answer: 2 years.

**Question #89. What is the expected retention period for used/processed test booklets - one or two years?**

Answer: Eighteen months after issuance of individual score reports.

**Question #90. Regarding requirement 3.11 page 39 of the RFP: Please clarify that you intend to shift the rubrics for grade 3 and 4 from the current 1 to 5 scale to the proposed 1 to 6 scale for LAL constructed response reading items and writing tasks.**

Answer: Grade 3-4 responses will continue to use the 1-5 scale; grade 8 will continue to use the 1-6, as is used on the HSPA. Bidders may recommend an appropriate scale for grades 5, 6, and 7.

**Question #91. Please clarify the requirements for automatic rescore. Requirement 3.11 on page 39 of the RFP states: “For all open ended items in grades 4, 6 and 8, responses shall be automatically rescored when student’s scale scores fall within one standard error of measurement of the cut point for a particular content area.” Under 3.12.2.1 AUTOMATIC RESCORING, the RFP states, “Following the scoring of student tests, the contractor shall provide automatic rescoring of all open-ended items for all students whose raw score was within two raw score points of the cut score.” Which grades are subject to automatic rescore and which guideline is to be used?**

Answer: The corrected guideline for automatic rescoring is as follows: automatic rescoring applies to all grade levels and content areas, and must apply to all students whose scale score is within three (3) scale score points of the proficiency cut point, i.e., 197-199 under the current state scale of 100-300.

**Question #92. Regarding the requirement: “The contractor shall provide for scoring of all open-ended items and writing prompts by a single rater with a 10% read-behind to ensure scoring accuracy.” Please define “read-behind”. Is this an independent (blind) second score by another qualified reader, or a back-read (review of the score assigned) by supervisory staff?**

Answer: The former definition applies, and assumes that the read-behinds are reviewed by supervisory staff as part of the larger scorer

training/monitoring process.

**Question #93.** **From the description of the item characteristic curve, it appears that NJDOE wants a 3-parameter IRT model. • Is this correct? • If so, will existing tests, such as GEPA, be converted from Rasch to a 3PL model? • If there is a conversion to the 3PL model, will new stats need to be computed for legacy items in the operational pool?**

Answer: The NJDOE withdraws the requirement for a 3PL model at this time.

**Question #94.** **Please provide volume assumptions for formative assessments across all years and by grade and content area.**

Answer: The formative assessment program will serve the same districts and students served by the summative assessment system: bidders should develop their formative assessment proposals accordingly.

**Question #95.** **Please describe the Formative Assessment implementation schedule; specifically, is the Formative Assessments solution expected to be implemented in the fall of 2005, and if so, is it expected to have NJ specific content?**

Answer: The NJDOE seeks to begin the implementation of the formative assessment services as soon as is credibly practical. Depending on final contract award date, the NJDOE recognizes that full implementation in the fall of 2005 may not be possible. The formative assessment component is intended to be both a practical tool for districts and part of the larger assessment literacy training component described in the RFP's requirements for training as well as formative assessment. Bidders must propose such an implementation schedule accordingly.