


**ESSA 2020-2021 Participation Rate Improvement Plan**

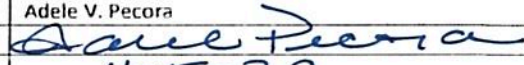
<b>School Name</b>	Seaford Middle School	<b>Contact Person Name</b>	John A. Striffolino
<b>School BEDS Code</b>	280206030005	<b>Contact Person Title/Position</b>	Assistant Super. Curriculum, Instruction & Personnel
<b>District Name</b>	Seaford UFSD	<b>Contact Person Phone Number</b>	(516) 592-4006
<b>District BEDS Code</b>	280206030000	<b>Contact Person Email</b>	jstriffolino@seaford.k12.ny.us

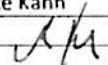
English Language Arts		Mathematics	
<input type="checkbox"/> All Students <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian/Alaska Native <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Native Hawaiian / Other Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> Black or African American <input type="checkbox"/> Economically Disadvantaged	<input type="checkbox"/> English Language Learners <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic or Latino <input type="checkbox"/> Multiracial <input type="checkbox"/> Students with Disabilities <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> None / Not Applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> All Students <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian/Alaska Native <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Native Hawaiian / Other Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> Black or African American <input type="checkbox"/> Economically Disadvantaged	<input type="checkbox"/> English Language Learners <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hispanic or Latino <input type="checkbox"/> Multiracial <input type="checkbox"/> Students with Disabilities <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> None / Not Applicable

Required Plan Component	School Response
<p><b>Please provide a brief explanation of why the 2017-18 and 2018-19 school year participation rates were below 95%.</b></p>	<p>In the school year 2017-18 there were 39 Hispanic students enrolled at Seaford Middle School. 13 of the 39 students took the N.Y. State Mathematics assessment resulting in a 33% participation rate.</p> <p>In the school year 2018-19 there were 43 Hispanic students enrolled at Seaford Middle School. 14 of the 43 students took the N.Y. State Mathematics assessment resulting in a 33% participation rate.</p>
<p><b>Provide a brief description of Consultation and Collaboration process for development of the plan.</b></p>	<p>The stakeholders met on July 21, 2020 to consult and collaborate for the development of the improvement plan. The participation data was reviewed and discussed. Further discussion occurred regarding strategies to implement focused on increasing the participation rate. The stakeholders previewed possible resources to use to improve the participation rate.</p>
<p><b>List the Stakeholders who consulted and collaborated on the development of the plan, and the dates of meetings held.</b></p>	<p>John Striffolino, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and personnel, Dr. Charles Leone, Director for Humanities, Daniel Smith, Principal of Seaford Middle School, Lisa Dunn, Assistant Principal of Seaford Middle School, Stacey Ranzie, School Counselor, Jenna Lubich, Teacher and Lisa Garcia, PTSA President.</p>
<p><b>Describe the chosen strategies and key activities to be implemented to improve Participation Rate at the school.</b></p>	<p>The stakeholders felt that the District should provide parents with more information concerning the NY State ELA and Mathematics assessments. This dissemination of information will be done in a variety of ways including sending out information, presenting information (PowerPoint) at parent meetings and posting information on the District website. Some of the information to be shared is included in this Download.</p>

By signing below, the building principal, Superintendent, and Board of Education President/Board of Trustees President certify that the 2020 – 21 PRIP has been approved and adopted by the district.

Principal Name:	Daniel Smith
Principal Signature:	
Date:	11-5-20

Superintendent's Name:	Adele V. Pecora
Superintendent's Signature:	
Date:	11-5-20

Board President's Name:	Bruce Kahn
Board President's Signature:	
	11/4/20



# 5

## Things every **parent** should know about New York State's plan for the **Every Student Succeeds Act**



### What is ESSA?

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is a law that outlines how states can use federal money to support public schools. In January 2018, the federal government approved New York State's plan to spend the approximately \$1.6 billion the state receives annually under ESSA.

### Why does it matter?

New York State is committed to ensuring that all students succeed and thrive in school no matter who they are, where they live, where they go to school, or where they come from. Since fall 2016, New York State asked for feedback to design a plan that improves equity, access, and opportunity for *all* students.

### What do parents need to know?

Below are highlights of important elements for parents and families in the plan. We encourage you to visit [the ESSA Section of NYSED's website](#) to learn more about the plan.

## 1

### New York State values a well-rounded education for all.

Parents and families should know how their child's school is performing in many areas, not just academic subjects.

#### Schools and districts will be measured annually on these indicators

##### For all schools

- English language arts
- Math
- Science
- Progress in learning English (for those who are learning English as an additional language)
- Chronic absenteeism (absent 10% or more instructional days)

##### For high schools

- Social studies
- Graduation rate
- College, career, and civic readiness index: taking advanced coursework, earning technical education certificates, etc.

#### Future indicators

- Out-of-school suspensions (beginning with 2018-19 results)
- Being ready for high school (once data becomes available)

## 2

### New York State wants to reduce testing time and improve the testing experience.



State tests in grades 3-8 English and math will be reduced from three to two days each.

## 95%

The law requires that 95% of students in each tested subgroup take the appropriate state tests. New York State will work with parents, schools, and districts to increase participation.



New York State will continue to translate state math and science tests into more languages, and when funding becomes available, will create a language arts tests in students' native languages.

3

**New York State will help teachers and school leaders be ready for success and ensure that all students have access to an excellent educator.**



The state will look at changes in how teachers and leaders are prepared to make sure they are ready on day one.



New York State has many excellent teachers. We will ensure that all schools have the ability to attract and keep them.

4

**New York State is piloting a process to ask parents for additional help when their child's school is identified for improvement.**



If your child's school is identified as low-performing ...



... then it will have to ask parents, teachers, and students how they think the school can do better ...



... and you will be able to participate in deciding how your school spends part of the federal money it receives to improve.

5

**New York State will provide parents with a more complete picture of their child's school.**



New public reports will show information on student test scores, graduation rates, and other outcomes for schools, districts, and the state, consistent with privacy laws.

The reports also will give information on things parents care deeply about, such as class size or opportunities for students to participate in the arts.

Parents will know how much each school is spending per student through the new reports.



The New York State Education Department will use the information in these reports to help districts adjust spending or come up with new ways to meet students' needs.





## The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) . . .

passed in 2015, is the main federal law governing kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade student education. Among other things, ESSA requires school districts to keep parents and guardians informed of their rights and provide parents and guardians of Multilingual Learners/English Language Learners (MLLs/ELLs) opportunities to be involved in their children's education by informing MLL/ELL<sup>1</sup> parents and guardians how they can be active participants in assisting their children with the following:

- Attaining English proficiency;
- Achieving high levels in core academic subjects within a well-rounded education; and
- Meeting the state's academic content and student academic achievement standards that all students are expected to meet.

<sup>1</sup> The federal term for MLLs/ELLs is "English Learner" (often abbreviated as EL).

## ESSA also requires school districts to . . .

seek MLL/ELL parent and guardian input and feedback in the development and evaluation of its MLL/ELL educational programs, including notifying parents and guardians of their right to regular meetings for this purpose. Also, Commissioner's regulations require districts to meet with MLL/ELL parents and guardians at least once a year to discuss their child's academic content and language development progress and needs. This is in addition to other generally required meetings, such as regularly scheduled parent teacher conferences.

## In addition . . .

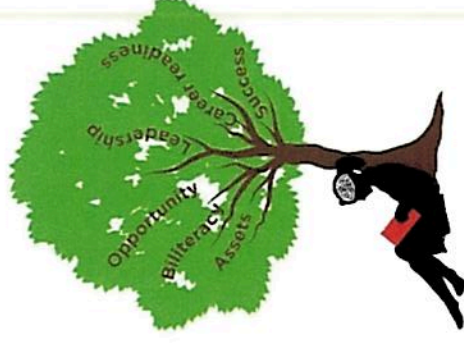
In NYS at and after initial identification of your child as a MLL/ELL, the district must also provide information on the following no more than ten days after enrollment:

- How your child was determined to be a MLL/ELL, your child's level of English language proficiency, how it was assessed, and the status/progress of his or her academic achievement;
- Methods of instruction used in your child's educational program and in other available program alternatives, including how such programs differ in content, instructional goals, and the use of English and home language instruction. Parents are to receive written guidance about how to select a program or method of instruction, if more than one is offered.

In NYS, this information may be provided in a mandatory, high-quality parent orientation session that takes place after your child's MLL/ELL identification<sup>2</sup>

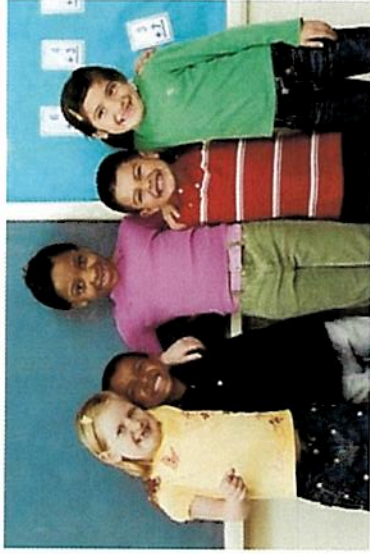
## The school district must provide information on:

- How your child's educational program will meet his or her educational strengths and needs;
- How the educational program will specifically help your child learn English and meet age-appropriate academic achievement standards for grade promotion and graduation;
- Specific exit requirements for the educational program, including the expected rate of transition from such programs into classrooms that are not tailored for MLLs/ELLs;
- The expected rate of graduation from high school, if the high school receives Title III funds, and in the case of a child with an Individualized Education Program (IEP), how such a program meets the objectives of the IEP of the child.



<sup>2</sup> Commissioner's Regulations Part 154-2.3(f) requires districts to provide a high-quality orientation session for parents and guardians of students identified as ELLs/MLLs.





You can find more information about the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) on NYSED's website at:

<http://www.nysed.gov/essa/information-parents>

## ESSA Fact Sheets

These fact sheets for parents summarize and explain the final ESSA plan. The fact sheets are available in 15 languages.

## ESSA Informational Video

This brief, parent-friendly video about ESSA implementation includes information on ESSA requirements and important changes.

## Approved New York State ESSA Plan

View [New York State's ESSA plan](#), as well as a summary of the plan.

If your school or district needs guidance in meeting these notification requirements, or if you have any questions, please contact:

NYS Education Department  
Office of Bilingual Education and  
World Languages at  
718-722-2445/518-474-8775

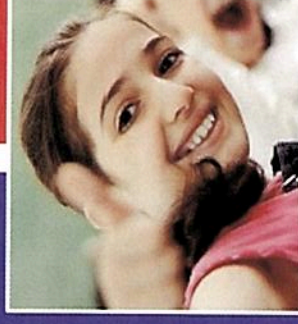
via phone,  
OBEWL@nysed.gov  
via email

or visit OBEWL's website:  
<http://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed>

Parents may also contact the NYSED ELL Parent Hotline at (800) 469-8224 via phone or [nysparenthotline@nyu.edu](mailto:nysparenthotline@nyu.edu) via email to make a complaint or inquiry.



**The Rights of Multilingual Learner/English Language Learner Parents, Guardians, and Other Caregivers under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)**





# Things every parent should know about student participation in statewide assessments under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)



New York State  
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
Knowledge > Skill > Opportunity

**The Every Student Succeeds Act outlines how states can use federal money to support public schools. New York receives \$1.6 billion in federal funding each year to support its public schools.**

## What are the statewide assessment participation requirements under ESSA?

ESSA requires that every state assess all students in English language arts and math each year in grades 3-8 each year and at least once in high school. While New York State does not have any laws regarding parents' rights to choose whether their children participate in state testing, federal law requires that:

- States must ensure that 95% of students in each public school, including charter schools, participate yearly in required state assessments.
  - This applies to all student subgroups, which include racial/ethnic groups, English Language Learners/Multilingual Learners, low-income students, and students with disabilities.
- If requested, school districts and charter schools are required to provide parents with information on state or local policies regarding the rights of parents to choose not to have their children participate in state testing.
- States are not required to create or change any laws they have in place regarding parental preference on participation in assessments.

## What happens to my child if I advise the school that I prefer that my child not participate?

There are no consequences for a child who does not participate in a state assessment. However, state assessment results are used to help:

- Parents learn about their children's academic achievement;
- Teachers understand how well students are learning what is being taught;
- School, district, and state education leaders determine what is and is not working well; and
- Stakeholders identify achievement gaps that may be forming among different student populations.



When too few students participate or complete state assessments, it's harder for educators to recognize gaps and provide extra support to the students who need it the most. Students who do not do well on a state assessment, or who are not on track to become proficient in ELA, math, science, and/or social studies can qualify for extra instructional support, guidance counseling, attendance improvement services, and help with study skills.

<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/assessment/ei/2018/2018-additional-information-assessments-essa.pdf> provides more information on how districts decide if a student needs these services.

## What will my child do during testing if I advise my school that I prefer that he/she should not participate?

That will depend on your school district's policy. Districts have flexibility to allow students to engage in other activities such as reading quietly in the room where the test is given or participating in other activities in different rooms while the test is administered. Check with your child's principal or the school district superintendent for your local policies. For students who do not participate in state assessments districts may have students engage in some other learning activity during this time.

## What should districts do when parents inform the school that they do not wish to have their child participate in State assessments?

NYSED does not provide guidance on this issue because this is decided at the local level. Districts should provide accurate information to help parents make an informed decision regarding their children's participation. The Department created an optional "[Assessments Toolkit](#)" to help superintendents communicate to school communities about New York's annual testing program. The toolkit contains materials such as a sample letter to parents and a PowerPoint presentation about the assessments.





## How will participation affect my child's permanent record and the reports I receive about my child?

While parents receive individual student results, state law prohibits including a student's individual scores on the State grades 3-8 ELA and math tests on the student's transcript or permanent record. Results are provided to help students and parents better understand where a student is doing well and where he or she may need additional assistance. All students receive a score report; those who do not participate receive a report that indicates that the student did not take the test and did not receive a valid score.

## What happens if my child participates in only part of the state assessment or gets sick and cannot finish?

At the elementary/middle level, students will be considered "not tested" if they:

- are absent from school for one or more of the test sessions and the missed session(s) are not completed during the makeup period;
- are present for one or more test sessions but do not respond to even one question on the test; or
- refuse to participate in both test sessions.



If a student refuses some but not all questions or sessions of the assessment, the student will receive a score and performance level based on the questions completed.

If a student becomes ill during the test session, earlier on the day of the test session, or for the entire day of the test session and is not able to return to school during the make-up administration period, the school should mark the student as absent for the test session they missed. If the student is marked as absent, the student will be counted as "not tested." If the student is not marked as absent, the student will receive a performance level (e.g., a Level 1-4) based on the questions they completed. For more information on conditions under which students will be considered tested or not tested, see the "Validity Rules: Reporting Students with Valid or Invalid Scores" section of the [Student Information Repository \(SIRS\) Manual](#).

## What are the participation requirements for English Language Learners/Multilingual Learners (ELLs/MLLs) and students with disabilities (SWDs)?

### ELLs & MLLs

ESSA and Commissioner's Regulations require that ELLs be tested every year in language arts and math. Also:

- All ELLs, regardless of grade, must also take the New York State English as Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT), which provides information on English language proficiency and is used for both placement decisions and to inform instruction.
- Schools may exempt ELLs/MLLs who have attended school in the United States (but not Puerto Rico) for less than 12 months as of April 1, 2018 from participation in the 2018 Grades 3-8 ELA Tests. All other ELLs/MLLs are expected to participate in the Grades 3-8 ELA Tests.
- All ELLs/MLLs are expected to participate in New York State's 2018 math tests. Schools have the option to test students in their home language if it is determined that this will provide the most accurate information about the student's proficiency in math. Tests are provided in printed booklets and via Computer Based Testing, in Chinese (Traditional), Haitian Creole, Korean, Russian, and Spanish. More information about New York State's translated math instructional modules and released test questions can be found on [EngageNY](#).

For more information about ELLs/MLLs' educational rights in New York State, please see Commissioner's Regulations Part 154-2 and Part 154-3 on the [Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages website](#).

### SWDs

All students, including students with disabilities, must be included in and are expected to participate in State assessments. The Committee on Special Education (CSE) must decide for each student with a disability, on an individual basis, whether the student will take the general State assessment or, for students with severe cognitive disabilities, the New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA). The CSE's decision as to whether the student will participate in either the general or alternate assessment must be documented in the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP). The criteria the CSE must use to decide eligibility for the NYSA is on the [Department's website](#).



More information on ESSA can be found on the U.S. Department of Education's website at [www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov). New York State's approved ESSA plan, as well as additional resources for parents and districts can be found on [our website](#).





# FACT SHEET FOR PARENTS



## ESSA Accountability & New York Schools: Understanding New School Ratings

The Every Student Succeeds Act, or ESSA, the main federal law for K-12 public education, aims to ensure all children get a quality education. The law requires that states hold public schools accountable for how students achieve. ESSA does give states flexibility—their accountability systems can measure much more than just test scores.

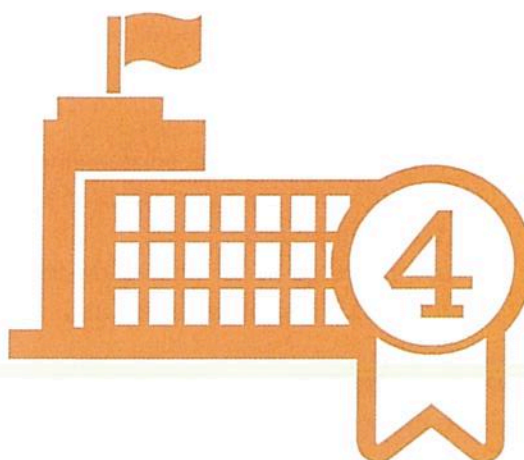
ESSA promotes educational equity, which means that all students succeed and thrive in school no matter who they are, where they live, or where they go to school. Accountability systems help make this possible by sparking an honest conversation about what schools are doing well and what they need to do to improve. Accountability systems provide opportunities to learn from high-performing schools and direct funds and resources to districts and schools that need to improve.

### The New Accountability System

The New York State Education Department (NYSED) has established a new set of indicators to measure school performance. NYSED developed these indicators with the input of thousands of people statewide—parents, educators, and experts. The new indicators go beyond a narrow focus on measuring achievement in English language arts and mathematics. They include other core subjects, such as science and social studies, and have a much stronger focus on student growth and school progress. Assessments are still an important part, but the new accountability system offers a more complete look at how a school is performing. The new system also includes nonacademic measures of school performance.

The new indicators include student academic achievement, student growth and school progress, progress of English language learners, chronic absenteeism, and, for high schools, graduation rates and preparing students for college, career and civic engagement.

For each of these indicators, every school earns a score of “1” to “4.” One is the lowest. Four is the highest. Schools get a score for all students and for student subgroups, such as members of racial and ethnic groups, low-income students, students with disabilities, and English language learners.



## How Schools are Classified

The accountability system classifies schools into one of three categories: In Good Standing, a Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) school, or a Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) school. Both CSI and TSI schools are eligible for additional support.

A school can be identified as CSI because the school performs at level “1” on a combination of the new indicators or for high schools, if for all student groups, the graduation rate is less than 67 percent. Beginning in 2018-19, New York will identify every three years at least 5 percent of all schools statewide as CSI.

A school can be identified as TSI if one or more student subgroups performs at a level “1” on a combination of the new indicators. If a school had been in Good Standing, then it takes two years of low performance before the school becomes TSI.

## How the Rankings are Put to Work

This classification system is all about achieving equity. By identifying schools that need the most attention, NYSED and school districts can focus resources on these schools.

If your child’s school has been identified as a **CSI school**, several steps will happen:

- Your school will conduct an assessment to determine what works well and what does not. Parents and community members will have the opportunity to take part in this. Then, your school will develop a school improvement plan.
- Once approved by the district and the state, the improvement plan will be implemented. It will include at least one school-wide improvement strategy. This could include changing how funds are spent or strengthening how classrooms support students’ social and emotional health. Teachers and staff will take part in professional development. And your school will be eligible for funds to support the improvement strategy.
- Your school will ensure that parents and students have opportunities to help decide how some school funds are spent or engage in other activities that give voice to students and parents.
- If your school does not improve, additional actions will be required, and if low-performance persists a school may be placed into Receivership.

If your child’s school has been identified as a **TSI school**, several steps will happen:

- Your school will conduct an assessment to determine what works well and what does not—parents and community members will have the opportunity to take part in this. Then, your school will develop a school improvement plan.
- Once approved by the district, the improvement plan will be implemented, including at least one school-wide improvement strategy. Your school will receive additional technical support from the district.
- Your school will survey parents, teachers and students every year.
- If your school does not improve after several years, your school could be classified as CSI.

Thank you for your support as your school, district and the state work to ensure an excellent education for all students. Please contact your school’s principal to learn how you can be involved in building a stronger school.



## **SAMPLE**

### **2019 Annual Assessment Talking Points**

#### **Why Test?**

- All students must be prepared for success in college and careers.
- Whether they want to go to college or straight into the workplace, students need to be able to think critically and solve complex problems. With these tools, students have more choices about their futures and can make the most of their opportunities.
- The annual assessments are only one of several indicators of student performance. However, they provide objective information about how students are progressing toward the higher level skills and knowledge required to be successful after high school. Parents have a right to this information.
- Tests objectively inform parents and teachers about their students' progress compared to other students across the state.
  - Annual assessments are also used to help ensure that traditionally underserved students—students receiving special education or ESL services, students from low-income communities, or students of color—are not overlooked.
- The annual ELA and math tests for students in grades 3-8 are required by the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015.

#### **Test Changes**

- In response to concerns from parents and educators, the State Education Department has made changes to the annual Grades 3-8 English Language Arts and Mathematics Assessments over the past several years. However, this year's exams remain unchanged from last year's.
- Last year, the assessments were reduced from three test sessions per subject to only two sessions per subject. That change remains in effect this year, meaning each subject will have two days of testing instead of three. With fewer test sessions, each test will have fewer questions than in recent years, lessening test fatigue for students and better enabling them to demonstrate what they know and are able to do.
- The 2019 assessments will continue to be untimed. This basically means that students will have as much time as they need on the test during the confines of the regular school day, as long as they are working productively. Students who do finish may be permitted to leave the testing room if others are still working.
- This year, most of the test questions on the assessments are written by New York State teachers specifically for the annual New York State tests.

## **SAMPLE**

### **2019 Annual Assessment Talking Points**

- In all, hundreds of New York State educators were involved in creating and reviewing questions for 2019 Grades 3-8 ELA and Math Tests and selecting the questions for the test forms.
- As in previous years, the State Education Department plans to return the instructional reports based on the 2018 assessment results to schools on or around June 1.
- The State Education Department also plans to release 75-percent of the questions from this year's tests. [The 2018 test questions are online at EngageNY](http://www.engageny.org/3-8). (www.engageny.org/3-8)
- The 2019 Score Reports for Parents will feature the redesigned format and easy-to-understand language that was introduced in 2016. The updated reports are clearer and provide more information about what students should know and be able to do at each grade level.
- Like last year, some districts will administer the 2019 Grades 3-8 ELA and Math Tests on the computer. Computer-based testing (CBT) has the potential to make the assessments stronger instructional tools and will make it possible to get test results back sooner.
- The computer-based test will have the same questions as the paper version but students will take the test on a computer or tablet. The State Education Department plans to have additional districts utilize CBT next year. The long-term plan is to have all districts using CBT for annual state tests.

### **Moving Forward**

- In 2017, the Board of Regents voted to adopt the Next Generation Learning Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics.
- The new standards will be implemented over the next few years giving teachers and students ample time to feel comfortable with the revised content.
- The annual ELA and Math Tests will not measure the new standards until the 2020-2021 school year. Professional development on the new standards will happen between now and then.



## **PARENTS' FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT NEW YORK STATE'S ANNUAL GRADES 3-8 ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS & MATHEMATICS TESTS**

Every spring, the Grades 3-8 English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics Tests are administered to students across New York State. These annual ELA and math tests for students in grades 3-8 are required by the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015. The tests are designed to measure how well students are mastering the learning standards that guide classroom instruction and help to ensure that students are on track to graduate from high school with the critical thinking, problem solving, and reasoning skills needed for success in college and the workplace. The tests also show how schools and districts are progressing with the learning standards and can be used to support professional development for teachers.

- 1. Is the length of the 2020 tests the same as the 2019 tests?**
  - Yes, like the 2019 tests, the 2020 Grades 3-8 English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics Tests are two sessions each. This means that students will take each subject test over only two testing days instead of three as was the case prior to 2018.
- 2. When will the 2020 Grades 3-8 ELA and Math Tests be administered?**
  - The ELA Tests administered by paper and pencil will be given on two consecutive school days of the school's choosing between March 25 – March 27. The Math Tests administered by paper and pencil will be given on two school days of the school's choosing between April 21 – April 23.
  - The ELA tests administered on computer will be given on two consecutive school days of the school's choosing between March 24 – March 31. The Math Tests administered on computer will be given on two school days of the school's choosing between April 20 – April 27.
  - There are make-up test dates for students absent on test days.
- 3. What are computer-based tests?**
  - For the fourth year in a row, some districts/schools have chosen to administer the 2020 ELA and Math Tests on the computer. This is called computer-based testing (CBT).
  - Students in those schools utilizing the CBT option have access to CBT practice tests and their districts must have had prior experience participating in computer-based tests in ELA and Math.
  - The computer-based tests will have the same questions as the paper versions. However, students testing on computer will select their answers for multiple-choice questions on the computer and type their responses to open-ended questions rather than handwriting their responses to these questions in the paper test booklet.
- 4. Will the test continue to be untimed?**
  - Like the 2016 - 2019 tests, the 2020 Grades 3-8 ELA and Math Tests will be untimed. Schools and districts have the discretion to create their own approaches to ensure that all students who are productively working are given the time they need within the confines of the regular school day to take the tests. A supervised lunch break should be arranged for students during any of the test sessions if necessary.
  - If the test is given in a large-group setting, administrators may permit students who finish to hand in their test materials (or submit the test if testing on computer) and leave the room. If so, students should exit quietly so they do not disturb any students still working.
  - While exact testing times will vary by student, estimated testing times are in the [2020 Educator Guides](#).
- 5. What types of questions are asked on the tests?**
  - The ELA and Math Tests include multiple choice and open-ended questions, which assess grade-level learning standards.
  - The questions require students to apply their knowledge and, in open-ended responses, explain their reasoning. Students will read texts, write responses, and solve real-world word problems, all of which are foundational skills necessary for success in their next grade.
  - The Department will continue to release at least 75% of test questions that count toward students' scores, including all of the open-ended questions. You can view the [2019 released questions](#) at EngageNY.
- 6. How are New York State teachers involved in the test development process?**
  - Hundreds of New York State educators were involved in creating and reviewing questions for the 2020 Grades 3-8 ELA and Math Tests and selecting the questions for the test forms.
- 7. Are there testing accommodations for students with disabilities?**
  - Yes, testing accommodations are changes made in the administration of the test that provide an opportunity for students with disabilities to demonstrate mastery of skills and attainment of knowledge without being



limited or unfairly restricted due to the effects of a disability. Specific testing accommodations are recommended for individual students by the school's Committee on Special Education (CSE) or Section 504 Committee based on the student's unique needs.

- Testing accommodations must be documented on students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) or Section 504 plans and could include: flexibility in scheduling (e.g., scheduled breaks); flexibility in the test setting (e.g., separate location); changes in test presentation (e.g., enlarged print); and changes in the method of response (e.g., use of a scribe for written responses).
- Principals are responsible for ensuring that accommodations for students with disabilities are implemented on all State and local tests consistent with the recommendations in the IEP/Section 504 plan and in accordance with Department policy.

**8. Do English Language Learners/Multilingual Learners (ELLs/MLLs) who are new to the United States take the Grades 3-8 ELA Tests?**

- For the Grades 3-8 ELA Tests, schools are allowed to exempt ELLs/MLLs (including those from Puerto Rico) who, on April 1, 2019, will have been attending school in the U.S. for the first time for less than one year.
- All other ELLs/MLLs are expected to participate in the 2020 Grades 3-8 ELA Tests.
- There are no exemptions for students from the Grades 3-8 Math Tests.

**9. Are there testing accommodations for English Language Learners/Multilingual Learners?**

- Yes. The school principal may authorize certain testing accommodations to English Language Learners/Multilingual Learners in accordance with their best judgment about the needs of these students. Principals should consult with each student's classroom teacher in making these determinations.
- Testing accommodations could include, for both the ELA and Math Tests, separate location; and bilingual glossaries; and for the Math Tests only, translated editions in Chinese (traditional), Haitian Creole, Korean, Russian, and Spanish; oral translation (for lower-incidence languages); and writing responses in students' native language.

**10. What will I learn from my child's score report?**

- The results of the annual assessments will provide information about your child's academic progress and achievement. You can use your child's score report to guide a discussion with your child's teacher(s) about additional supports that may be helpful in school, as well as ways to support your child's learning at home.
- The report will show you how your child did in comparison to other students across the State and how your child scored in specific skill and concept areas. For example, the ELA report gives scores for both reading and writing; the Math report gives scores for the key math concepts for your child's grade level.
- State test results may differ from the information on your child's school report card. Report card grades are cumulative and based on many factors, including class participation, homework, attendance, quizzes, tests, and other instructional activities, all of which are important in determining a child's academic achievement.

**11. When will the 2020 Grades 3-8 ELA and Math Test results be available?**

- As in prior years, we anticipate the test results will be available in August.

**12. How will the 2020 Grades 3-8 ELA and Math Test results be used?**

- The results can be used to see how schools, districts, and the State overall are progressing with the State learning standards. The 2019 scores for your school/district are available on the [Department's public data](#) site.
- State law and Regulations of the Commissioner prohibit school districts from making promotion or placement decisions based solely or primarily on student performance on the Grades 3-8 ELA or Math Tests. However, the statute provides that a district may consider student performance on the assessments in these decisions provided it uses multiple measures in addition to the assessments and the assessments do not constitute the major factor in such determinations. Districts should also establish procedures to ensure that parents/students are involved in and may appeal such determinations.
- Additionally, results from the 2020 Grades 3-8 ELA and Math Tests cannot be used to evaluate teachers.



# THE STATE ASSESSMENTS

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## What Parents Need to Know



## **Agenda**

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- **Annual Grades 3-8 English Language Arts & Mathematics Tests**
  - Test Content
  - Test Results
  - Redesigned Score Reports for Parents
  - Test Facts
- **Adjustments to the Tests in Recent Years**
  - Fewer Test Sessions
  - Untimed
  - Greater Teacher Involvement
- **What's Next?**
- **Q+A**



## Test Content

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The annual Grades 3-8 English Language Arts and Mathematics Tests:

- ❑ Focus on the New York State learning standards, which guide classroom instruction in ELA and math;
- ❑ Measure important real-world skills such as problem solving, critical thinking, and writing; and
- ❑ Require students to explain their answers and describe and defend their reasoning.

## Test Results

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Your child's test results...

- ☐ serve as an 'academic checkup' to make sure your child is on track for the next grade level;
- ☐ measure progress over time so you can see your child's year-to-year performance; and
- ☐ provide a deeper level of information by pinpointing what skills your child has mastered and what skills your child is still developing.

This information is included in the **Score Reports** for parents. The reports were updated a few years ago to be **easier to understand** and provide **more information about what students should know** and be able to do at each grade level.



## Test Facts

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- ❑ The federal Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 requires that students in grades 3-8 are tested once a year in ELA and math.
- ❑ State law and Regulations of the Commissioner prohibit school districts from making promotion or placement decisions based solely or primarily on student performance on the Grades 3-8 ELA or Math Tests.
  - ❑ However, the statute provides that a district may consider student performance on the assessments provided it uses multiple measures in addition to the assessments and the assessments do not constitute the major factor in such determinations.
  - ❑ Districts should also establish procedures to ensure that parents/students are involved in and may appeal such determinations.
- ❑ Scores are not used to evaluate teachers.

## Test Changes

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- ❑ Over the past few years, the State Education Department has made several changes to the annual Grades 3-8 ELA and Math Tests in response to concerns from parents and educators.
- ❑ In 2018 and 2019, the Grades 3-8 ELA and Math Tests were reduced from three test sessions per subject to only two sessions per subject this year. That change remains in effect this year.



## **Test Changes – No Time Limits**

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- ❑ The **2020 tests will again be untimed**, as they have been for the past several years.
- ❑ Students who are still working on their exams will be allowed to continue to work, within the confines of the regular school day. A supervised lunch break should be arranged for students during any of the test sessions if necessary.
- ❑ Schools and districts have discretion to allow students to read silently or quietly exit the room when they have completed their test while others continue to work.

## **Test Changes – Greater Teacher Involvement**

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- ❑ The 2020 Grades 3-8 ELA and Math Tests were **thoroughly reviewed and constructed by New York State educators** to ensure they measure what students are learning in their classrooms.
- ❑ The assessments will again feature test questions written by New York State teachers specifically for the annual New York State tests.
- ❑ Educators from across the State came to Albany multiple times this past summer and fall to review and select all passages and questions on the 2020 tests.





## **Test Changes – Earlier Release Dates**

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- ❑ **Test questions and instructional reports will be released on or around June 1.**
- ❑ The June release date of instructional reports gives teachers time to use the information before the end of the school year.
- ❑ The State Education Department will release **75-percent of test questions from the 2019 exams**, as in prior years. You can view the [2019 questions](http://www.engageny.org/3-8) ([www.engageny.org/3-8](http://www.engageny.org/3-8)) at EngageNY.





## **What's next for the 3-8 tests? Computer-Based Testing**

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- ❑ Computer-based tests are tests administered on a computer, tablet, or Chromebook. In other words, **students take the test on a computer** instead of using a pencil and paper.
- ❑ Computer-based testing (CBT) has the **potential to make the assessments stronger instructional tools and will make it possible to get test results back sooner.**
- ❑ This spring, some districts chose to participate in CBT for the Grades 3-8 ELA and Math Tests. The computer tests and the paper tests are the same tests.





## What's next?

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- ❑ In September 2017, the Board of Regents voted to adopt the Next Generation Learning Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics.
- ❑ The new standards have been implemented over the last few years giving teachers and students ample time to feel comfortable with the revised content.
- ❑ Professional development on the new standards is now underway and will continue.
- ❑ The annual ELA and Math Tests will not measure the new standards until the 2020-2021 school year.





# Questions + Answers







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**Learn more about the assessments**

Visit [NYSED.gov](https://www.nysed.gov) and [EngageNY.org](https://www.engageNY.org)

Talk to your child's teacher



