

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What are the New Jersey Student Learning Assessments?

Formerly known as PARCC, the New Jersey Student Learning Assessments (NJSLA) are computer-based assessments used to measure the knowledge, concepts, and skills identified for each grade level (3-12) as per the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for English Language Arts/Literacy, Mathematics, and Science. <https://www.state.nj.us/education/cccs/>

How are NJSLA assessments used to meet federal requirements?

In 2015, the Common Cores State Standards were reviewed and revised to ensure that they set consistently high expectations for New Jersey's students. In May, 2016, the NJ State Board of Education adopted the revised mathematics and English language arts standards and changed the name of all nine areas of New Jersey's standards to the NJ Student Learning Standards. The NJSLA assessments replace the PARCC assessments, and are used to meet the requirements of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act. For more on the history of standardized testing in New Jersey, visit: <http://www.state.nj.us/education/assessment/history.shtml>

The New Jersey Student Learning Assessments provide information to teachers, parents, and students about whether students are working at expected levels and are on track for success for college and careers. Additionally, test results provide teachers with useful data to help inform and target specific areas for instruction. The results provide important information for districts regarding the success of curricular initiatives and instructional practices.

Are school districts required to administer the NJSLA, and if so, are students required to take the NJSLA?

Federal and State law require that all students take state standardized assessments, including the NJSLA assessments beginning in grade 3. See NJ DoE: New Jersey State Assessments <https://www.nj.gov/education/assessment/> See US DoE: Every Student Succeeds Act [ESSA] <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/index.html>

Is the NJSLA required for High School Graduation?

You may be aware that passing scores on the NJSLA are part of the “First Pathway” to meet High School Graduation Requirements for the Class of 2020. While it is not yet clear what high school graduation requirements will be for students expected to graduate in the years 2021 and beyond, the NJDOE and State Board of Education are continuing to work to finalize graduation requirements through the regulatory process. As such, students taking high school level courses (Algebra I or Geometry) should take the NJSLA assessments in order to keep options open for students in the event these assessments are utilized to satisfy future high school graduation assessment requirements. <https://www.state.nj.us/education/assessment/parents/GradReq.pdf>

What will students be expected to do on the NJSLA for ELA, Math, and Science?

In ELA/Literacy, students will read literary and informational texts and write several pieces to demonstrate they can independently read and work with a variety of texts of varying degrees of complexity. They are expected to write effectively in response to texts read, and build and communicate knowledge by integrating, comparing and synthesizing ideas. In Math, students will be asked to solve problems involving the key knowledge and skills for

their grade level (as identified by the NJSL), express mathematical reasoning and construct mathematical arguments, and apply concepts to solve model real-world problems. Grade level content and skills are probed on the NJSLA using a variety of question types. These include Evidence-Based Selected-Response [EBSR] questions, which are two-part multiple choice questions, Technology Enhanced Constructed Response [TECR] questions, require students to answer questions by dragging and dropping information as part of the response, and Prose Constructed Response [PCR] questions, which provide a text box for students to provide extended responses such as essays.

Will students have opportunities to practice the tests?

Yes. Students have opportunities in school to take practice tests on the computer. Students and families are also encouraged to review: ● NJSLA Practice Tests for ELA and Math (Gr. 3-8; Algebra I and Geometry) <https://nj.mypearsonsupport.com/practice-tests/> ● NJSLA Practice Tests for Science (Gr. 5 and 8 only) <https://measinc-nj-science.com/>

Will the tests be accessible to students with disabilities?

The intent is for the NJSLA assessments to be administered to all students, except those with the most significant cognitive disabilities for whom the state will administer a modified or alternate assessment. NJSLA makes the new tests as accessible as possible to all students. Parents should contact their child's case manager regarding accessibility options for students with IEPs or their child's principal/ school guidance counselor for students with 504 plans.

What happens if a student is absent on the day(s) the NJSLA is administered?

If a student does not attend school during test administration, they will be given the opportunity to make up the test section(s) missed. The school test coordinator will schedule the make-up session(s). If a student also misses the make-up session(s), they will have missed the opportunity

Where can I find more information?

Please visit the NJ DOE's ASSESSMENT INFORMATION for PARENTS. The State site has not been updated, but information presented about PARCC is still relevant with NJSLA. <https://www.nj.gov/education/assessment/parents/>