



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: February 11, 2021
 To: Chief School Administrators, Charter School and Renaissance School Project Leads
 Route To: District Test Coordinators, District Technology Coordinators, School Test Coordinators
 From: Lisa J. Gleason, Ed.D., Assistant Commissioner
 Division of Academics and Performance

Spring 2021 Statewide Assessment Postponement

The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) recognizes that the disruption to education due to the COVID-19 pandemic persists as schools and districts prepare for the spring 2021 assessment administration. While the United States Department of Education (USED) has not indicated that it will allow states to waive their statewide assessment obligations for the 2020-2021 school year, the NJDOE has heard requests from many stakeholders to explore all options regarding flexibilities prior to administering the statewide assessment systems. To further explore options, including flexibilities regarding the use of statewide assessment data in federal accountability systems – and to ease the burden of preparing for and administering assessments while these options evolve – **the NJDOE is postponing the planned start date of all assessments and plans to begin statewide assessment administration no earlier than April 5, 2021.**

The postponement applies to the New Jersey Student Learning Assessments (NJSLA) statewide assessment program in English language arts (ELA), mathematics, and science; the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) year-end assessments; the ACCESS for ELLs English language proficiency assessment; and the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs. NJSLA Training modules, originally scheduled to be available online starting February 22, 2021, will be delayed until March, with additional details forthcoming.

Statewide Assessment	Original Start Date	New Start Date
ACCESS for ELLs	February 16, 2021	TBD, Not before April 5, 2021
DLM	March 8, 2021	TBD, Not before April 5, 2021
NJSLA Math, ELA, Science	March 15, 2021	TBD, Not before April 5, 2021

The NJDOE acknowledges the tremendous efforts that students, educators, families and broader community members have made over the last year to adapt and adjust schedules, often very quickly, and is cognizant of the extensive planning efforts involved in preparing for statewide assessments, especially in those districts originally slated to begin administering the ACCESS for ELLs next week. The NJDOE is balancing efforts to prepare for all contingencies with providing districts with information as early as possible. Across the nation, states and schools are working to answer new and evolving questions about how to best provide statewide snapshots of student progress and growth while prioritizing the health, wellbeing and safety of all students and educators.

The NJDOE will provide updated information as soon as possible, as well as support as districts continue to tentatively schedule and plan for the spring administration. For questions or concerns, please contact the NJDOE’s Office of Assessments at assessment@doe.nj.gov or (609) 376-3960.

- c: Members, State Board of Education
- Angelica Allen-McMillan, Ed.D., Acting Commissioner of Education
- NJDOE Staff
- Statewide Parent Advocacy
- NJ LEE Group
- Garden State Coalition of Schools