



Toms River Regional Schools

April 17, 2021

Dear Parents, Guardians and Members of the School Community,

On April 14, 2021, the State of New Jersey Department of Education released a memo informing school districts that the New Jersey Student Learning Assessment (NJSLA) Spring 2021 in English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science have been cancelled. Recognizing that “we are in the midst of a pandemic that requires real flexibility,” the United States Department of Education has informed the New Jersey Department of Education that the administration of Start Strong assessments in fall 2021 will satisfy the federal statewide assessment requirement to administer general assessments in English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science for the 2020-2021 school year.

The Start Strong assessments in fall 2021 will be administered to all students in English Language Arts (ELA) grades 4-10, Mathematics grades 4-8, Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II, and in Science grades 6, 9, and 12. The Start Strong assessments will be administered in-person with a date to be determined.

The Start Strong assessment utilizes three performance levels (“Strong Support May Be Needed”; “Some Support May Be Needed”; and “Less Support May Be Needed”) to describe the level of support that a student might need to master the current year’s prerequisite skills and concepts.

The Start Strong assessments will include all of the same accessibility features included in NJSLA assessments. All students will be expected to participate in Start Strong just as all students and groups of students are ordinarily expected to participate in NJSLA.

The United States Department of Education is still requiring the New Jersey Department of Education to administer ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS or Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) to those identified students in our district. The administration of these assessments will continue and students taking these assessments have been notified.

At this time, we will continue administering ACCESS and DLM assessments and we will begin preparing for Start Strong assessments scheduled for this fall. As more information and guidance is released regarding Start Strong assessments, we will be forthcoming with those details.

Sincerely,

John H. Green

John H. Green
Director of Student Services, Central Registration and Testing