

Dear Families:

The annual New York State English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics tests for students in grades 3-8 will be administered to all students later this spring. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, these tests were cancelled in spring 2020 and offered on a limited basis in 2021. These tests are required by the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and are designed to provide important information about whether students are prepared to progress through school and graduate with the critical thinking, problem-solving, and reasoning skills they need for long-term success in school, college, careers, and life.

These tests are just one of several measures our schools use to assess student progress: grades, report cards, writing samples, projects, assignments, and other performance-based student work are equally important.

If you have additional questions, please contact your child’s school.

**When are the State tests for grades 3–8?**

This year the ELA and Math tests will be administered in two sessions on two consecutive days.

<b>ELA:</b> March 29–30	<b>Math:</b> April 26–27
Make-up ELA: March 31–April 8	Make-up Math: April 28–May 9

**How do State tests benefit my child?**

You and your child benefit from State tests because they:

- Provide detailed information about whether your child is learning what is expected of them for their grade levels.
- Help schools determine how students are progressing and performing compared to their peers, and which students or teachers may need more support.
- Allow you to learn how your child’s school is doing compared to other schools.

**What do the tests entail? How long does my child have to complete a state exam?**

Each test consists of two untimed sessions and is administered over two days (one session per day). Session 1 for both tests are multiple-choice only. Session 2 for ELA includes constructed response items. Session 2 for Math includes multiple-choice and constructed-response items. State tests are untimed. Students who need more time will be able to work at their own pace to better demonstrate what they know and can do.

**What is the impact of score results on teachers?**

There is no requirement, though depending on each school’s Measures of Student Learning selection criteria, state test results may or may not impact teacher evaluations.

**How do these tests factor into middle or high school admissions?**

Some middle and high schools have had academically screened programs that use State test scores as one of several criteria for admissions, but they can never be used as the sole or primary measure for promotion or admissions decisions. You can learn more about screened programs here:

[schools.nyc.gov/Middle](https://schools.nyc.gov/Middle) and [schools.nyc.gov/High](https://schools.nyc.gov/High). Given the impact of COVID-19, the way in which these schools considered State test scores was altered for fall 2021 admissions, and State test scores will not be used for fall 2022 admissions.

**Can families opt their children out of State tests, or request an alternative evaluation?**

- We strongly encourage all students to take these tests because both you and your child benefit from the information we learn through test results. State tests provide additional information on what your child is learning and help teachers and schools adjust support where needed.
- If you are interested in opting your child out of State tests, you should consult with your child's principal. If, after consulting with the principal, you still want to opt your child out of the exams, the principal will respect your decision. The parent and the principal should maintain a written record of this conversation.

**What should my child do to prepare for the test?**

- Help your child get a good night's sleep the night before the exam and have a good breakfast in the morning.
- Tell your child you have confidence in their ability!

**When will I find out how my child performed on the tests?**

- New York State usually releases test scores during the summer and the scores will be made available through your child's NYC Schools Account.
- We encourage you to reach out to your child's teacher or principal to discuss State test scores and overall academic progress.

**What happens if my child is not in school when the State exam is administered?**

It is important for your child to take the test. Please do all you can to support your child and ensure they are at school on testing days. Students who are absent, for any reason including COVID, will have a second chance to take the test during the make-up period. If your child is also absent during the make-up period, there will be no additional chances to take the test. Students will not be penalized or retained in the same grade solely for not taking a State test.

**Are State exams optional, as they were last year?**

No. Last year, principals sent out letters to families to opt in to take the State exams because many students were participating in hybrid or all remote instruction. This year, as schools have resumed full-time in-person instruction, all students are expected to take the State exams.

**Does my child have to take the State test if they are also taking a Regents exam?**

Some students take high-school-level Regents exams in middle school. If your child is in grade 8 and will take a math Regents exam this school year, your school will not administer the grade 8 State math test to them. You may choose to have your child take the grade 8 math test for more information about their progress, even though it is not required. Contact your school if you would like your student to take the grade 8 math test in addition to taking a math Regents exam.