



March 2020

**TO:** District Superintendents  
Superintendents of Schools  
Principals of Public, Religious, and Independent Schools  
Leaders of Charter Schools

**FROM:** Clara DeSorbo [REDACTED]

**SUBJECT:** Spring 2020 Grades 3–8 English Language Arts and Mathematics Tests and Grades 3–8 English Language Arts and Mathematics Field Tests

This memorandum provides you with essential information regarding both the Grades 3–8 English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics Tests, including the embedding of field test questions, and the stand-alone Grades 3–8 ELA and Mathematics Field Tests.

### **SCHEDULING OF TEST SESSIONS AND SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS DURING TESTING**

It is recommended that schools schedule the test sessions either at the start of the school day or immediately after lunch so that most students will have a sufficient block of time to complete each test session. It is further recommended that schools group together for testing those students who are expected to require more time to complete a test session than the pre-lunch or post-lunch block of time provides. Schools should arrange for such students to have a carefully supervised lunch break during any of the test sessions if necessary.

Secure test materials should be collected from the students prior to the start of the lunch break and returned following the supervised lunch break to those who had not completed the test. The school may permit these students to talk with each other and with the supervising adults during the lunch break, but the students must be instructed that they may not discuss the test content during the lunch break. So that their tests will not have to be invalidated, the proctor should not allow any students to resume work on a test session who during the lunch break violated the instruction not to discuss the test content.

In order to balance the daily load on the CBT testing platform statewide, schools testing via computer are expected to adhere to the following guidelines in developing the school's testing schedule.

<b>Total Number of Grade Levels Testing on Computer in the School</b>	<b>Recommended Number of Grade Levels That Test on Computer in the School on Any Given Day</b>
1 to 3 grade levels	1 grade level
4 or more grade levels	2 grade levels

School and district leaders who have any questions regarding this matter should contact the Office of State Assessment at: [emscassessinfo@nysed.gov](mailto:emscassessinfo@nysed.gov).

## GENERAL INFORMATION

[The 2020 Grades 3-8 English Language Arts and Mathematics Tests School Administrator's Manual](#) provides information needed for the administration of the ELA and Mathematics Tests and is available on the Department's website. Printed copies of the *School Administrator's Manual* are being sent to schools. If you have questions about any information appearing in this memorandum or the manual, you may call 518-474-8220 or 518-474-5902 for assistance. The *School Administrator's Manual* contains the *Deputy and Proctor Certificate*, the *Test Storage Certificate*, the *Exam Scoring Confidentiality Agreement*, and the *Scoring Operations Certificate*. These certificates must be completed and signed, as applicable to each form, by the principal, all persons who serve as proctors, the scoring leader, and all persons who serve as scorers for these exams. The Deputy and Proctor Certificate and the Test Storage Certificate must be retained in the school's files for one year. The *Exam Scoring Confidentiality Agreement* and the *Scoring Operations Certificate* must be retained for one year at the location at which the tests are scored.

## DELIVERY OF TEST AND SCORING MATERIALS

All test materials will be sent to schools by the Department's contractor, Questar Assessment, Inc. (Questar) and will be delivered by United Parcel Service (UPS). See Attachment A for delivery dates. UPS deliveries may occur at any time between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Schools that do not receive their shipments of test materials by 12:00 noon on the last dates indicated in Attachment A should contact Questar at 866-997-0695.

All schools administering the paper-based Grades 3–8 ELA and Mathematics Tests in 2020 must have made arrangements to receive their answer sheets and scanning services from a Regional Information Center (RIC) or large-city scanning center. RICs are data processing centers operated by twelve BOCES that provide answer sheets and scanning services for all schools outside the five large-city school districts. The RICs will provide the Student Information Reporting System (SIRS) for participating schools. Participation in the Grades 3–8 testing program and the Repository will allow



Make-up dates are to be used for administering the test to students who were absent during the designated administration dates. The make-up dates can also be used to complete the initial administrations in schools that were closed due to religious observance or unexpected events, such as power outages. When administering any make-up tests, maintain the same testing sequence whenever possible. For example, administer Session 1 first, followed by Session 2. Students must complete all test sessions to receive a final test result. A school district shall not penalize a student for refusing to participate in the Grades 3-8 State assessments.

**ELA TEST ADMINISTRATION AND MAKEUP DATES**

<b>ELA Tests</b>	<b>Administration Dates</b>	<b>Make-up Dates</b>
Paper-based Tests	Wednesday, March 25 – Friday, March 27	Monday, March 30 – Wednesday, April 1
Computer-based Tests	Tuesday, March 24 – Tuesday, March 31	Monday, March 30 – Friday, April 3

**MATHEMATICS TEST ADMINISTRATION AND MAKEUP DATES**

<b>Math Tests</b>	<b>Administration Dates</b>	<b>Make-up Dates</b>
Paper-based Tests	Tuesday, April 21 – Thursday, April 23	Friday, April 24 – Tuesday, April 28
Computer-based Tests	Monday, April 20 – Monday, April 27	Friday, April 24 – Thursday, April 30

In order to balance the daily load on the CBT testing platform statewide, schools testing via computer are expected to adhere to the guidelines provided on page 1 of this memorandum.

Earth Day is on April 22, 2020, which falls within the window of dates available to schools to conduct the primary administration of the 2020 New York State Grades 3-8 Mathematics Tests. As shown in the chart above, schools administering the paper-based tests have a window of three days, April 21, 22, and 23, in which to administer the two test sessions to their students. Although schools are ordinarily expected to select two consecutive days from within the testing window to administer the tests, those schools that deem it preferable to not administer the tests on Earth Day are permitted, subject to their district'

who has this accommodation, all numbers and mathematics symbols, along with words, should be spoken by the teacher to the student. For example, the symbol < should be read as “less than,” and 1,211 should be read as “one thousand, two hundred, eleven.” However, test questions may never be modified or simplified, nor may teachers provide additional examples.

For CBT students, either a human reader or the online text-to-speech accommodation may be used. For additional information on Test Read Accommodations see the [“Testing Accommodations for Students with Disabilities.”](#)

## **USE OF COMMUNICATIONS DEVICES**

All students are prohibited from bringing cell phones and certain other personal electronic devices, as defined in the script included in Step 6 of the *Teacher’s Directions*, into a classroom or other location where a State test is being administered. Test proctors and school officials shall retain the right to collect and hold any prohibited electronic devices prior to the start of the test administration. Admission to the test shall be denied to any student who is in possession of a cell phone or other prohibited electronic device and refuses to relinquish it.

Some students with disabilities may use certain recording/playback devices **only** if this accommodation is specifically required as a provision of the student’s IEP or 504 Plan. In addition, a student may be allowed to retain an otherwise prohibited device in their possession if there is documentation on file at the school from a medical practitioner that the student requires such a device during testing. Without such documentation, the general policy on communications devices as provided in the [2020 Grades 3-8 English Language Arts and Mathematics Tests School Administrator’s Manual](#) is in effect, and the school may not allow the student to retain any such equipment while testing.

## **SCRATCH PAPER FOR THE CBT TESTS**

Schools that will be administering the 1 0 -(cho)3(.002F4300440051 nBTerin)4E5(i)5(C)15(B)15(T )19(TE)17(S

these test sessions

Paper-based field tests will be provided in regular, test read, large-type, and braille editions, as well as Spanish editions (for mathematics only). Schools are not expected to include students in the field test who during the operational test are making use of a translated edition (for mathematics only) that is not available for the field testing. Grades 3–8 ELA and Mathematics Field Tests will be delivered to schools by Questar the week before field testing. Questar will use the information your school submitted through the Department’s online examination request system to

**SHIPMENT AND CHECKING OF THE 2020 ELA AND MATHEMATICS TEST MATERIALS**

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Sender</b>	<b>Delivery Dates</b>
<u>Secure</u> Grades 3–8 ELA Regular, Test Read, Braille, and Large-Type Edition Sessions 1 and 2 Booklets; Nonsecure Teacher’s Directions	Questar	March 16–March 18