**THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT** / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

BUREAU CHIEF
Office of State Assessment

February 2019

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

**FROM:** Clara DeSorbo

**SUBJECT:** Spring 2019 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.

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**Schools this year will again be afforded a three-day window to administer the two-day tests.** Each Local Education Agency (LEA — district, charter, religious, or independent school) should choose two consecutive school days for the primary test administration for each grade of the test within the established testing window. These two days may differ by grade. All schools within the LEA that are administering the paper-based tests (PBT) to students should adhere to the same locally selected primary testing days to the extent this is feasible. The primary testing window for computer-based testing (CBT) continues to be six school days long. Makeups may begin on the school day immediately following the last day of the primary test administration. If an LEA chooses the first and second days of the testing window as its primary testing days for a certain grade, makeups may begin on the third day.

**These tests are untimed.** As long as they are working productively, students should be allowed as much time as they need **only within the confines of the regular school day** to complete each test session. Schools are not expected to extend the school day in order for students to complete a test session. In addition, schools may not extend a test session beyond its scheduled day unless the student has multiple-day testing as a specified testing accommodation in their Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Accommodation Plan (504 Plan).

**Mathematics Tests–Specifications for Calculators:**

- Grades 3–5: Calculators are **not** allowed on any part of the Grades 3–5 Mathematics Tests.
- Grade 6: Students in Grade 6 are **NOT** permitted the use of a calculator or mathematics tables for Session 1. For Session 2, students should have exclusive **use of a four-function calculator with a square root key or a scientific calculator**. Graphing calculators are **NOT** permitted. The use of mathematics tables is permitted for Session 2 for students in Grade 6 only if specified in the student's IEP or 504 Plan.
- Grades 7–8: Students in Grades 7–8 should have exclusive **use of a scientific calculator** for both Session 1 and Session 2. Graphing calculators are **NOT** permitted. The use of mathematics tables is permitted for Sessions 1 and 2 for students in Grades 7 and 8 only if specified in the student's IEP or 504 Plan.

The *2019 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. This memorandum supplements the information concerning the administration of the spring 2019 Grades 3–8 ELA and Mathematics Tests provided in the *School Administrator's Manual*.

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*, which must be completed by each school administering these tests and retained in the school's files for one year.

**DELIVERY OF TEST AND SCORING MATERIALS**

All test materials will be sent to schools by the Department's vendor, 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 2019 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 currently provide answer sheets and scanning services for all schools outside the five large-city school districts. The RICs will also provide data to the Student Information Repository System (SIRS) for participating schools. Participation in the Grades 3–8 testing program and the repository will allow all schools access to reports for their school. More information about the repository system is available on the Department's website. Answer sheets will be shipped directly to schools from the RIC or large-city scanning center. (The Department does not ship answer sheets to any schools.)

**CHECKING THE SHIPMENT OF TEST MATERIALS**

As soon as each shipment of test and scoring materials arrives at your school or approved storage location, conduct an inventory to verify that you have received all materials indicated on the shipping notice**. Do not open shrink-wrapped packages of secure test materials until the day on which that part of the test is scheduled to be administered.** You must store the test materials in a burglarproof safe or vault, except while they are being inventoried.

For the ELA and the Mathematics Test Session 1 booklets, each shrink-wrapped package of the regular editions of the printed test booklets will contain many different test forms spiraled together. These test forms will have form letters as well as form numbers printed on the front cover and inside cover of the test booklet. It is important that students accurately record the form letter and form number on their answer sheets. For students taking computer-based tests (CBT), the form letters and form numbers used by the student will be recorded automatically. All test read, large-type, braille, and alternative language editions will be the same form, Form A3. There is only one form for every edition of the ELA and Mathematics Test Session 2 booklets.

Note that large type, braille, and alternative language editions are often shipped to schools in separate cartons or padded mailers and may not be delivered at the same time as regular editions. Braille editions of ELA test booklets may be delivered later than the delivery dates indicated in Attachment A.

- If your school receives its shipment but an item or items are missing that are listed on the shipping notice, please contact Questar at 866-997-0695.
- If your school requires items that were not originally requested, including any unexpected need for test materials for students with accommodations, please contact Questar via e-mail at ny.3-8.help@questarai.com. Questar will determine whether the regional center has the materials

necessary to satisfy the additional request. After contacting Questar, the school should contact the official in charge of the regional center to arrange pickup of test materials on each day of test administration. All schools should make sure that all students taking paper-based tests correctly indicate the Session 1 forms they are using (both letter and number) on their answer sheets.

- The official school representative picking up secure test material must present to the regional center official a photo ID and a letter of authorization signed by the principal listing the materials to be picked up. This letter, authorizing the school representative to pick up test materials, must be written on school stationery. (**Note:** Secure materials can be obtained from the regional center **only** on the day that they will be administered.)
- The school representative must countersign the authorization letter and leave it with the regional center official before the emergency supply of materials can be released.
- Information on regional centers is available at the Office of State Assessment's website.

**SECURITY OF THE GRADES 3–8 ELA AND MATHEMATICS TESTS BEFORE TESTING**

The principal of each school ordering tests is responsible for making the necessary arrangements to safeguard all test materials by taking the following actions:

- Place all test booklets and scoring CDs in a safe or vault as soon as they arrive at the storage site.
- Distribute only the nonsecure Teacher's Directions to proctors as soon as practical after the shipment arrives.
- Ensure that no one opens the shrink-wrapped packages of secure test materials prior to the day each part of the test is scheduled to be administered.
- Open the packages of test booklets just early enough to permit distribution of materials for each session.
- Check the safe or vault daily to ensure that the test materials stored there have not been tampered with and remain secure.
- Safeguard the combination or key to the safe or vault to preclude access to the test materials by unauthorized persons.
- Keep all scoring materials under lock and key in a secure location (except when being used for scoring).

**EMBEDDED FIELD TEST QUESTIONS**

The Department continues its commitment to embed multiple-choice questions for field testing within the spring Grades 3–8 ELA and Mathematics Tests. Embedding field test questions allows for a better representation of the student population and more reliable field test data on which to build future tests.

It will not be apparent to students whether a question is a field test question that does not count toward their score or a test question that does count toward their score. The embedding of field test questions reduces the amount of stand-alone field testing but does not eliminate the need for it. For additional information on the 2019 stand-alone field tests, please see pages 6–7.

**TESTING SCHEDULE**

Schools must arrange to administer the ELA and Mathematics Tests to students during the specified "Administration Dates" in the charts below. The ELA and Mathematics Tests are two sessions each per grade and must be administered over two consecutive school days.

The primary administration dates for the CBT ELA and Mathematics Tests start a day earlier than the PBT. If a CBT school chooses to start testing on the first day of the CBT administration window, they may open the corresponding PBT materials on the same day, if needed, to access accommodated materials for students with an IEP or 504 plan or for eligible English Language Learners/Multilingual Learners.

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.

**ELA TEST ADMINISTRATION AND MAKEUP DATES**

| ELA Tests | Administration Dates | Make-up Dates |
|---|---|---|
| Paper-based Tests | Tuesday, April 2 – Thursday, April 4 | Friday, April 5 – Tuesday April 9 |
| Computer-based Tests | Monday, April 1 – Monday, April 8 | Thursday, April 4 – Thursday, April 11 |

**MATHEMATICS TEST ADMINISTRATION AND MAKEUP DATES**

| Math Tests | Administration Dates | Make-up Dates |
|---|---|---|
| Paper-based Tests | Wednesday, May 1 – Friday, May 3 | Monday, May 6 – Wednesday, May 8 |
| Computer-based Tests | Tuesday, April 30 – Tuesday, May 7 | Friday, May 3 – Friday, May 10 |

**Note:** Grades 7 and 8 students who are receiving instruction in a commencement-level mathematics course and who will be taking a Regents Examination in mathematics in June 2019 may be exempted by the school from the respective Grade 7 or 8 Mathematics Test.

**TEST READ**

For the 2019 Grades 3–8 ELA and Mathematics Tests, students with disabilities whose IEPs or 504 Plans specify this accommodation must have tests read to them in accordance with the testing conditions and implementation recommendations specified on the student's IEP or 504 Plan. When a test is read to a student with a disability, the test should be read in its entirety, which includes directions, passages, test items, questions, and answer choices. The test must be read in a neutral manner, without intonation or emphasis, and without otherwise drawing attention to key words or phrases. Passages and questions must be read word for word, without any clarification or explanation. Unless the IEP or 504 Plan indicates otherwise, passages, parts of passages, questions, and answer choices may be reread to the student upon the student's request. 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.

**SCRATCH PAPER FOR THE CBT TESTS**

Schools that will be administering the ELA and Mathematics Tests with CBT should prepare to furnish scratch paper to their students for use when taking the tests. At the start of each test session, the proctor should hand out scratch paper to each student testing with CBT. For the Grades 3–8 ELA Tests, each student should be given one sheet of lined ruled paper, such as loose leaf paper. For the Grades 3–8 Mathematics Tests, each student should be given two sheets of scratch paper; one sheet of plain paper and one sheet of graph paper. In addition, for all test sessions the proctor should have on hand a further supply of scratch paper to provide to students who during the test session request additional sheets. Students testing with CBT should also be advised that any work done on this scratch paper will not be counted. The scratch paper distributed to students testing with CBT must be collected at the end of the session whether used or unused, and securely destroyed by the school.

**SCORING MATERIALS FOR THE GRADES 3–8 ELA AND MATHEMATICS TESTS**

A scoring CD will be sent to schools for each of these tests. The CD will contain PDF files of the scoring materials. Schools must print enough copies of the scoring materials to supply one to each scorer.

**SCORING OF THE GRADES 3–8 ELA AND MATHEMATICS TESTS**

**NOTE:** Teachers are **not** permitted to score their own students' answer papers.

Teachers may not begin to train for scoring or rate student responses until the primary administration of the specific grade-level test that the teacher is rating has been administered in the teacher's school.

**SECURITY OF THE GRADES 3–8 ELA AND MATHEMATICS TESTS FOLLOWING TESTING**

The Department will be releasing all of the test questions in English Language Arts Test Session 2 and Mathematics Test Session 2 shortly after the scoring window has ended. Unused booklets for these test sessions may be used for instructional or staff development purposes after the scoring window has closed.

ELA Test Session 1 and Mathematics Test Session 1 must **not** be used for instructional or staff development purposes. The PBT booklets for these sessions must be returned to Questar using the return shipping materials provided in the Return Kit. Schools are responsible for ensuring that their materials being returned to Questar **do not include Answer Sheets or used Session 2 booklets**. The ELA Test Session 1 booklets must be shipped to Questar beginning May 13, 2019 and post marked no later than May 24, 2019. The Mathematics Test Session 1 booklets must be shipped to Questar beginning June 10, 2019 and postmarked no later than June 19, 2019.

**Destruction of Secure Test Materials for Grades 3–8 ELA and Mathematics Tests**

| Return via UPS to: Questar Assessment Inc. | Securely Destroy upon Completion of Test Administration (for CBT only) | Store Securely in School or District for **One Year**, then Securely Destroy |
|---|---|---|
| • **All used** and **unused** printed English Language Arts Test Session 1 booklets<br>• **All used** and **unused** printed Mathematics Test Session 1 booklets<br>• **All used** Mathematics Test Reference Sheets (Grades 5–8) | • **All used** scratch paper<br>• Student login credentials, session access codes, and proctor PINs | • **All used** printed English Language Arts Test Session 2 booklets<br>• **All used** printed Mathematics Test Session 2 booklets<br>• **All used** printed answer sheets after their return from the scanning center |

**SECURE STAND-ALONE 2019 ELA AND MATHEMATICS FIELD TESTS**

A critical part of the test development process is the field testing of questions in schools throughout the State in order to ensure the validity and reliability of the New York State Testing Program. Our goal is to require the least amount of testing necessary to build and administer high quality New York State assessments that provide accurate information about our students' achievement. These field tests contain questions that may only be used on New York State tests and benefit only our students and schools.

From May 20–June 7 for computer-based field tests and from May 28–June 7 for paper-based field tests, the stand-alone Grades 3–8 ELA and Mathematics Field Tests will be administered in most schools whose students participated in the 2019 Grades 3–8 ELA and Mathematics Operational Tests. Schools assigned to administer the field tests will be asked to administer only ELA or mathematics and will be asked to administer them in only one grade. The field test does not need to be administered on the same day to every student in the field-tested grade. Schools can choose to administer the field test on as many days as they choose, within the field test window. Schools that are administering Grades 4 or 8 Science Field Tests will not be asked to administer the stand-alone Grades 3–8 ELA or Mathematics Field Tests.

The ELA and Mathematics Field Tests must be administered within the prescribed dates. Each school will determine the specific date(s) to administer the field tests during this prescribed time frame. If a student is absent on the day(s) the school administers the field test, there is no need for the student to make it up. Additional information will be available in the *Field Tests School Administrator's Manual* that will be shipped to schools. Schools are expected to administer the assigned field test to all students in the selected grade who are participating in the spring 2019 Grades 3–8 ELA and Mathematics Tests, subject to the availability of special formats that some students may require.

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 determine the appropriate quantity of field test materials for the ELA and Mathematics Field Tests. The field tests will be shipped to the approved secure storage site indicated by the principal in the online

examination request system. Step-by-step instructions for administering these field tests will be provided by Questar in the *Field Tests Teacher's Directions*. These instructions will be shipped to schools with the ELA and Mathematics Field Tests.

After the delivery of the field tests, principals must inventory the test materials and compare the number received with the quantities listed on the packing list. If any discrepancy is found between the packing list and the materials received, please contact Questar Customer Support at 866-997-0695 or via e-mail to ny.3-8.help@questarai.com. Please note that shrink-wrapped packages of field test booklets cannot be opened prior to the distribution of field tests to students.

For schools selected to participate in the computer-based Grades 3–8 ELA and Mathematics Field Tests, schools will receive a package from Questar that will be shipped directly to schools and will contain the *Field Tests School Administrator's Manual and Field Tests Teacher's Directions* for the grade and subject assigned to the schools. For the computer-based field tests, regular and Spanish editions (for mathematics only) will be available. Schools are not expected to include students in the field test who during the operational test are making use of a special edition that is not available for the field tests.

Following the administration of the stand-alone ELA and Mathematics Field Tests, schools must collect all of the field test materials and store them in a secure location until they are returned to Questar. Questar will provide schools with instructions for arranging the pre-paid pickups of the ELA and Mathematics Field Tests. Schools must return **all** used and unused field test materials to Questar by **June 11, 2019**. Schools should follow the detailed instructions for returning the field test materials provided by Questar. The scoring of the ELA and Mathematics Field Tests will be conducted by Questar. Schools are not permitted to score them.

**Attachment A**

## SHIPMENT AND CHECKING OF THE 2019 ELA AND MATHEMATICS TEST MATERIALS

| Contents | Sender | Delivery Dates |
|---|---|---|
| Secure Grades 3–8 ELA Regular, Test Read, Braille, and Large-Type Edition Sessions 1 and 2 Booklets; Nonsecure Teacher's Directions | Questar | March 26–March 28 |
| Secure Grades 3–8 ELA Scoring CD containing PDF files of the scoring materials for schools | Questar | April 2 |
| Secure Grades 3–8 Mathematics Regular, Test Read, Braille, Large-Type, and Alternate Language Edition Sessions 1 and 2 Booklets; Nonsecure Teacher's Directions | Questar | April 10–April 12 |
| Secure Grades 3–8 Mathematics Scoring CD containing PDF files of the scoring materials for schools | Questar | May 1 |
| Printed instructions for administering Computer-based Stand-Alone Field Tests<br>Secure Accommodated Editions of the Stand-Alone Field Tests for CBT Schools | Questar | May 15–May 16 |
| Printed instructions for administering Paper-based Stand-Alone Field Tests<br>Secure Paper-based Stand-Alone Field Tests including Accommodated Editions | Questar | May 22–May 23 |

Schools that do not receive their Grades 3–8 ELA test booklets and teacher's directions by noon on March 28 or their Grades 3–8 Mathematics test booklets and teacher's directions by noon on April 12 should contact Questar at 866-997-0695.