



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: January 19, 2022
To: Chief School Administrators, Charter School and Renaissance School Project Leads
Route To: District Test Coordinators, District Technology Coordinators, School Test Coordinators, Principals
From: Gilbert E. Gonzalez, Acting Assistant Commissioner
Division of Teaching and Learning Services

ESEA Waiver Extension Notification: Middle School Higher Level Math Assessments

The United States Department of Education has granted the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) an [extension of its 2017 waiver](#) from specific statutory and regulatory provisions regarding middle school math assessment requirements established under the federal *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA) as amended by the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) through the 2024-2025 school year.

This waiver extension enables the NJDOE to continue to allow each New Jersey seventh grade student who is enrolled in an advanced-mathematics course (Algebra I, Algebra II, or Geometry) to take an end-of-course assessment commensurate with their course of study instead of a grade-specific mathematics assessment. Eighth grade students will continue to be able to take the end-of-course assessment for the course in which they are enrolled instead of the Grade 8 mathematics assessment, as allowed under ESSA.

However, starting with the 2021-2022 school year, sixth grade students enrolled in Algebra I will be required to take both the Grade 6 mathematics assessment and the Algebra I end-of-course assessment. These students will no longer be permitted to take only the Algebra I end-of-course assessment. The results of the Grade 6 math assessment will be used for school accountability calculations in the current year, while the results of the Algebra I assessment taken in sixth grade will be used to meet high school testing requirements under ESSA and be used for school accountability calculations when the student is in ninth grade. This change ensures that students are included in ESSA accountability calculations for each grade three through eight and once in high school.

The NJDOE is committed to empowering New Jersey schools and districts to promote the growth of all students. To advance that commitment, the NJDOE encourages schools and districts to create mathematics course pathways that allow students to reach their highest potential regardless of grade level. One way schools and districts may do this is to allow middle school students to take advanced-mathematics courses in lieu of grade-level mathematics courses and to take the corresponding assessment associated with the course.

Contact Information

Comments, concerns, and general feedback may be submitted by email to ESSA@doe.nj.gov.

c: Members, State Board of Education
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Statewide Parent Advocacy Network
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