



Board of Education
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CARLSBAD MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS
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Dear Parent/Guardian,

The New Mexico Public Education Department (PED) is initiating a formal request to the U.S. Department of Education to waive federally required statewide assessment activities for the 2020-21 school year, allowing PED to work with schools for an opt-in participation model. Given this option, the Carlsbad Municipal School Leadership Team has decided not to administer spring assessments for the 2020-21 school year. The rationale for this decision includes, but is not limited to, the following:

HEALTH & SAFETY FIRST

The COVID-19 pandemic have impacted New Mexico schools and families and the ability of all students to fully participate and benefit from a stable learning environment. Like many other states, New Mexico closed schools in spring 2020; and while the schools are opening back up, it is with a conservative approach that our district is able to reenter into a hybrid model. As we approach the spring 2021 testing window, New Mexico finds itself in a situation parallel to spring 2020, with the health and safety of our students being paramount.

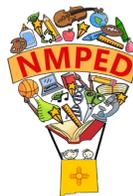
FOCUSED PRIORITIES FOR REMAINDER OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR

It is imperative that the time remaining during the instructional calendar is focused on acceleration and bridging learning gaps. Students' academic and emotional needs will vary during reentry into the school setting depending on the levels of opportunity to learn. These variables will present difficulties in assessing students and render many assessment results inconclusive or speculative. The challenges of remote instruction and COVID disruptions this year are well understood. As such, the state along with school districts and assessment providers are partnering to provide support in every way possible. While standards based assessment results are valuable, we believe that the remaining time in the school year would be best utilized in classroom instruction, rather than assessment. Additionally, in alignment with that support, links can be provided to families if they wish to provide practice tests, towards familiarizing students with various assessment platforms.

INTERIM ASSESSMENTS

It is still imperative that teachers understand where each child is academically and, to that end, the district has continued to utilize interim assessments through the school year. An interim assessment is a test administered at different intervals during the school year to check students' grasp on content and to guide future instruction. The results of the varied assessments utilized (Istation, ANet, ECOT, etc) are being used regularly by your child's teacher to direct instruction and have been deemed adequate in furthering education, at this point.

In conclusion, as a district we have the flexibility to allow families to participate in testing without penalty or concern of negatively impacting state accountability. If you are interested in having your child take one of the state summative assessments (provided in the addendum attached), please contact our office by Friday, February 26, 2021. Laura Cordova, Assessment & Accountability Coordinator at 575-234-3300 ext. 1028 or Carol McAlister, Director of Student Data Services at 575-234-3300 ext. 1025, can be contacted to answer any questions that you may have.



STATEWIDE TEST ASSIGNMENT GUIDELINES

ESSA Required Assessment

Local education agencies (LEAs) are to use the following guidelines when assigning required statewide assessments.

Opt-In Testing

- In preparation for an approved [waiver](#), school leaders are encouraged to work with their communities and families to determine local desire to opt-in for ESSA summative assessments program. These assessments will need to be administered securely, proctored in person, and take place on site. Schools will have the flexibility to allow families to participate in all testing or partial testing without penalty or concern of negatively impacting state accountability.

Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities

- Students whose Individual Education Plan (IEP) teams have determined that the alternate assessment is appropriate will take the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) assessment in math and ELA in grades 3–8 and 11.
- These students will take the DLM in science in grades 5, 8, and 11.
- English learners whose IEP teams have determined that the alternate assessment of English language proficiency is appropriate will take the Alternate ACCESS assessment starting with the grade in which identified (alt-ACCESS available for grades 1–12), and until they achieve an overall composite score of P1 or higher.
- Students with significant cognitive disabilities are exempt from the Istation Indicators of Progress (ISIP) assessment.

Required Test Assignments for General Education Student With or Without IEPs

English Learners

- Students identified as English learners (ELs) by the WIDA or W-APT screening assessments will take the ACCESS for ELLs English language proficiency (ELP) assessment.
- ELs enrolled in a U.S. school for less than a full academic year may be exempted from taking the ELA assessment during their first year in a U.S. school. They will take math, science, and ELP assessments as appropriate.
- ELs enrolled in a U.S. school for less than three consecutive academic years may take the science, math, and language arts assessments in the home language of Spanish where those assessments are available.
- ELs enrolled in a U.S. school for four to five consecutive academic years may apply for a [waiver](#) to assess in the home language of Spanish.
- ELs enrolled in a U.S. school for more than five consecutive academic years must take all assessments in English.

High School Students*

- Students enrolled in grade 11 will participate in the SAT School Day with Essay and in the New Mexico Assessment of Science Readiness (NM-ASR).

Students in Grades 3–8

- Students in grades 3–8 must take their grade-level New Mexico Measures of Student Success and Achievement (NM-MSSA) test in ELA and math. This includes students enrolled in advanced math classes.
- Students in grades 5 and 8 will take the NM-ASR for their grade level.

*All assessments are assigned by grade leveled enrolled. To ensure correct ESSA participation calculations, students are not permitted to test above or below their grade level. In rare cases, there may be exceptions allowed which require PED approval. If so, please send an email to ped.assessment@state.nm.us with "Seeking Off-Grade Testing Permission" in the subject line.