March 18, 2019

Dear Parent/Guardian:

New Jersey has had statewide tests for decades, and they have served an important part of assessing our students’ annual progress. In the spring, your child will participate in the New Jersey Student Learning Assessments (NJSLA) to measure his or her academic progress with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards. The NJ Department of Education has reduced the number of test items this year, resulting in fewer units as compared to prior years.

Willingboro Public Schools will administer the New Jersey Student Learning Assessments to students in Grades 3 through 11 in the subject areas of Mathematics and English Language Arts. Additionally, students in Grades 5, 8 and 11 will also take an assessment in the subject area of Science. The NJ Department of Education has provided parent companion guides to every portion of the NJSLA. Please click on the links provided to access this important information:

- NJSLA - Mathematics Companion Guide
- NJSLA - English Language Arts Companion Guide
- NJSLA - Science Grade 5 Companion Guide
- NJSLA - Science Grade 8 Companion Guide
- NJSLA - Science Grade 11 Companion Guide

The NJ Student Learning Assessments are administered at different points in time depending upon the school and grade level. Please click on the links below to access our different testing schedules.

- NJSLA Testing Schedule - Elementary Schools (Grades 3 & 4)
- NJSLA Testing Schedule - Middle Schools (Grades 5, 6, 7 & 8)
- NJSLA Testing Schedule - Willingboro High School
- NJSLA Testing Schedule - The Alternative School at Levitt

The WPS Office of Curriculum and Instruction will be hosting an NJSLA Parent Information Session on Thursday, April 4 from 6-7 PM. Additionally, please refer to the NJSLA F.A.Q on the accompanying page for more information regarding the assessment and test refusals.

Yours in education,

Dr. Ronald G. Taylor
Superintendent of Schools
WPS NJSLA F.A.Q: What You Need to Know

How will the students take the NJSLA?

- The majority of students take the NJSLA on an electronic device. Students will enter responses on the device, but will have pencil and paper handy to formulate responses beforehand if they choose to do so. Some students with specific Individual Education Plans may take the NJSLA on paper if deemed necessary. Parents of these students will be contacted by each school’s testing coordinator prior to administration. It should be noted that per established testing procedures per the NJ Department of Education, once a student completes the test or the designated section of the test, students are permitted to read quietly.

How will our schools use the test results?

- The results will enable our district to evaluate the effectiveness of its programs in science, mathematics, and language arts. NJSLA is more in-depth than the previous state tests. It measures student progress toward all grade-level standards, rather than just a sampling of the standards. NJSLA results will help teachers pinpoint areas in which an individual student either needs more attention or who exceeds grade-level standards. For parents, NJSLA will provide individualized information on their children’s progress toward meeting academic standards. The NJSLA test results will not be used to determine promotion or report card grades.

What happens if I refuse to let my child take the test?

- State law and regulations require all students to take state assessments. For the 2018-2019 school year, all students shall take all applicable standardized assessments as scheduled. Per the aforementioned, you may not opt out your child out of statewide assessment. Since standardized testing is part of the State required educational program, schools are not required to provide an alternative educational program for students who do not participate in the statewide assessment. For the days and times on which the standardized assessment shall be administered, the assessment is the designated educational activity provided by the school. The following procedure shall be adhered to for any case of test refusal:

  o Parents and Guardians who refuse to allow their child(ren) to test, must complete the Statewide Standardized Test Refusal Form, available in the Office of Curriculum and Instruction
  o Students who attend school without a refusal letter on file will be tested as scheduled;
  o Students who attend school with a refusal letter on file will be asked to read quietly for the duration of the testing time frame. No alternate instructional activity will be provided;
  o Parents and Guardians who do not send their child to school on a day of testing will receive a phone call from the attendance officer. Absences will be treated as per policy guidelines;
  o An indication that a student will not be taking the test, as a reason for the absence, will be treated as an unexcused absence;
  o Students absent for administration will be expected to be present and to take the test on a makeup date;
  o Any disruption will be handled in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct; and
  o Testing protocols will be followed and test booklets will be coded/reported accordingly.
  o Policy dictates that the School Testing Coordinator will use reasonable judgment as to the need and availability of an alternate testing area for students who refuse to take the state mandated assessment. Such an area may or may not be provided dependent upon need.