March 11, 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian:

New Jersey public schools have had statewide tests for decades, and they have served as an important part of assessing our students’ annual progress. In the spring, your child will participate in either the New Jersey Student Learning Assessments (NJSLA) or the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) to measure your child’s overall academic progress.

Willingboro Public Schools will administer these 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. English Language Learners as well as students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and 504 plans can receive certain NJSLA accommodations on a case by case basis.

The NJ Department of Education has provided a comprehensive parent portal for the New Jersey Student Learning Assessments. There, parents may look up student-specific reports, along with report guides, test information, and a library of digital test items. Please click here to access this portal.

Students with the most significant intellectual disabilities take an alternate assessment in English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science called the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM). If your child has special needs and you have questions regarding testing accommodations, please contact your child’s Case Manager. For more information on the Dynamic Learning Maps, please click here.

All statewide assessments are administered at different points in time depending upon the assessment, the school and grade level. Please refer to this chart which outlines our district testing schedules in Grades 3-11.

Please refer to the NJSLA F.A.Q (Frequently Asked Questions) List on the accompanying page for more information regarding these assessments.

Yours in education,

Nadine Tribbett
Acting Superintendent
Willingboro Public Schools - Frequently Asked Questions List:
What You Need to Know About State Assessments

What can I do at home to assist my child in taking these assessments?
We ask that you ensure that your child is rested, eats breakfast, and is relaxed. Eating breakfast helps keep
the children from becoming hungry and distracted. If your child wears a device such as glasses, hearing aids,
etc., be sure he/she remembers to bring it and wear it during all testing sessions. Also, students are
encouraged to bring their own earbuds/headphones for testing. Encourage your child to do his/her best work
possible, but try not to be overly anxious about test scores. Too much emphasis on scores can be upsetting to
children. Lastly, please do not send your child to school if illness is apparent. There will be time set aside for
make-up testing for students who miss school due to illness.

How will the students take these assessments?
The majority of students take these assessments 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 assessments on paper if deemed necessary.
Parents of paper-based testing students will be contacted by each school’s testing coordinator prior to
administration.

What happens if my child finishes an assessment early?
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.

What happens if I refuse to let my child take the assessment?
State law and regulations require all students to take state assessments. You may not opt 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:
- 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
- Students who attend school without a refusal letter on file will be tested as scheduled;
- 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;
- 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;
- An indication that a student will not be taking the test, as a reason for the absence, will be treated as an
  unexcused absence;
- Any disruption will be handled in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct; and
**How will the assessments be scored and by whom?**
Certain sections of each assessment, depending upon the type of question being asked, may be scored by computer. Other sections will be scored by trained individuals guided by rubrics to evaluate written responses.

**When will we receive results?**
Based on information we have received from the New Jersey Department of Education, results from spring testing will be available at the end of summer and mailed home at the start of the school year in the fall.

**How will our schools use the results?**
The results of these assessments will enable the school district to evaluate the effectiveness of its programs in science, mathematics, and language arts. These results will also help teachers pinpoint specific areas in which an individual student may need more attention. For parents, these results will provide individualized information on their children’s progress toward meeting academic standards. State Assessment results will not be used to determine retention/promotion nor will they have an impact on report card grades.