



March 2019

Dear Parent/Guardian,

As our District gets ready to begin our annual ELA & Math Assessments we wanted to provide you with updated information from the New York State Education Departments (NYSED) Office of State Assessment. As you review the information below we would like you to consider that new school accountability measures have been put in place that will hold schools accountable for all students in grades 3 through 8, whether they take an assessment or not. This new system will have an impact on how our schools get categorized on the states list of 'schools in need of an improvement plan'. If low participation rates continue we will undoubtedly find some of our schools on this list starting this year, and this could have a ripple effect on how our schools are perceived in the community.

In a few weeks, the New York State Grades 3-8 English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics Tests will be administered to students. The ELA exam will be given on April 2 and April 3, and the math exam will be given on May 1 and May 2.

On the reverse side of this memo you will find a summary of the changes that NYSED made to the Grades 3-8 English Language Arts and Mathematics Tests over the past several years. These changes were made to address the concerns that both parents and educators had with these assessments. NYSED is encouraging school districts to share these details with our parents and the school community.

If you have any further questions or concerns please do not hesitate to reach out to my office or to your building Principal.

Thank you,

Mr. Jose L. Carrion
Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Michelle Cardwell
Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum &
Instruction

Below you will find a summary of the changes that NYSED made to the Grades 3-8 English Language Arts and Mathematics Tests over the past several years. These changes were made to address the concerns that parents and educators had with these assessments:

- **Fewer testing sessions.** Last year, the Grades 3–8 ELA and Math Tests were reduced from three test sessions per subject to only two sessions per subject, meaning each subject will have two days of testing instead of three. With fewer test sessions, each test will have fewer questions than in past years, lessening test fatigue for students and better enabling them to demonstrate what they know and are able to do.
- **The tests continue to be untimed so students who are still working on their exams will be allowed to continue to work, within the confines of the regular school day.**
- **Test questions reviewed and written by New York State Teachers.** Hundreds of New York State educators were involved in creating and reviewing questions for 2019 Grades 3-8 ELA and Math Tests and selecting the questions for the test forms.

Teacher and Principal Evaluation/APPR

- **Student performance on the 2019 Grades 3-8 ELA and Mathematics Tests will have no employment-related consequences for teacher and principal evaluations.** This means no teachers or principals in New York State public schools will be affected by the results of the 2019 Grades 3-8 ELA and Math Tests.

Release of Test Questions and Instructional Reports

- **Test questions and instructional reports will be released before the end of the school year.** Like the past several years, the State Education Department will release 75-percent of questions from the 2019 tests and the instructional reports for educators on or around June 1. [You can view 2018 test questions on EngageNY.](https://www.engageny.org/3-8) (<https://www.engageny.org/3-8>)

You can find more information about the [State tests](http://www.p12.nysed.gov/assessment/ei/eigen.html) on the State Education Department's website. (<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/assessment/ei/eigen.html>)