



Bureau Chief
Office of State Assessment

March 2023

TO: District Superintendents
Superintendents of Schools
Principals of Public, Religious, and Independent Schools
Leaders of Charter Schools

FROM: Clara DeSorbo *Clara DeSorbo*

SUBJECT: Spring 2023 Grades 3–8 English Language Arts and Mathematics Tests and Grades 3–8 English Language Arts and Mathematics Field Tests

This memorandum provides you with essential information regarding the Spring 2023 Grades 3–8 English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics Tests and the Grades 3–8 English Language Arts and Mathematics Field Tests.

GENERAL INFORMATION

[The 2023 Grades 3–8 English Language Arts and Mathematics Tests School Administrator's Manual](#) provides information needed for the administration of the ELA and Mathematics Tests and will be available on the [Office of State Assessment \(OSA\)'s website](#). The *School Administrator's Manual* contains the *Deputy and Proctor Certificate*, the *Test Storage Certificate*, the *Exam Scoring Confidentiality Agreement*, and the *Scoring Operations Certificate*. These certificates must be completed and signed, as applicable to each form, by the principal, all persons who serve as proctors, the scoring leader, and all persons who serve as scorers for these exams. The *Deputy and Proctor Certificate* and the *Test Storage Certificate* must be retained in the school's files for one year. The *Exam Scoring Confidentiality Agreement* and the *Scoring Operations Certificate* must be retained for one year at the location where the tests are scored.

DELIVERY OF TEST MATERIALS

Test materials, including ELA and Mathematics Test Session 1 and Test Session 2 booklets and Test Session 1 Constructed-Response answer booklets (ELA only), will be sent to schools by the Department's contractor, Questar Assessment, Inc. (Questar), and will be delivered by United Parcel Service (UPS). See Attachment A on page 7 of this memo for delivery dates. UPS deliveries may occur at any time between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Schools that do not receive their shipments of test materials by 5:00 p.m. on the last dates indicated in Attachment A should contact Questar at 866-997-0695 or via e-mail to ny.3-8.help@questarai.com. Please note that large-type Test Session 1 Constructed-Response answer booklets (ELA only) will not be included in the shipment of large-type test materials. They will be posted on [OSA's website](#).

All schools administering the paper-based Grades 3–8 ELA and Mathematics Tests must have made arrangements to receive their answer sheets and scanning services from a Regional Information Center (RIC) or large-city scanning center. Answer sheets will be shipped directly to schools from the RIC or large-city scanning center. (OSA does not ship answer sheets to any schools.) A complete [list of RICs and large-city scanning centers](#) is available on the Department's website.

CHECKING THE SHIPMENT OF TEST MATERIALS

As soon as each shipment of test materials arrives at your school or approved storage location, conduct an inventory to verify that you have received all materials indicated on the shipping notice. **Do not open shrink-wrapped packages of secure test materials until the day on which that session of the test is scheduled to be administered.** You must store the test materials in a safe or vault, except while they are being inventoried.

Please note that large-type, braille, and alternate language editions are often shipped to schools in separate cartons or padded mailers and may not be delivered at the same time as regular editions. Braille editions of ELA test booklets may be delivered later than the delivery dates indicated in Attachment A. If your school receives its shipment but an item or items that are listed on the shipping notice are missing, please contact Questar at 866-997-0695 or via e-mail to ny.3-8.help@questarai.com.

- If your school requires items that were not originally requested, including any unexpected need for additional test materials for students with accommodations, please contact Questar. They will determine whether the regional center has the materials necessary to satisfy the additional request. After contacting Questar, the school should contact the official in charge of the regional center to arrange pickup of test materials on each day of test administration.
- The official school representative picking up secure test materials must present to the regional center official a photo ID and a printed letter of authorization signed by the principal listing the materials to be picked up. This letter, authorizing the school representative to pick up test materials, must be on school stationary. Please note that secure test materials can be obtained from the regional center **only** on the day that they will be administered.
- The school representative must countersign the authorization letter and leave it with the regional center official before the emergency supply of materials can be released.
- [Information on regional centers](#) will be available on OSA's website.

TEST FORMS

For the ELA and the Mathematics Test Session 1 booklets, each shrink-wrapped package of the regular editions of the printed test booklets will contain many different test forms spiraled together. These test forms will have form letters as well as form numbers printed on the front cover and inside cover of the test booklet. It is important that students accurately record the form letter and form number on their answer sheets. For students taking computer-based tests (CBT), the form letters and form numbers used by the student will be recorded automatically. All test read, large-type, braille, and alternate language editions (mathematics only) will be the same form, Form A3. There is only one form for every edition of the ELA and Mathematics Test Session 2 booklets.

SECURITY OF THE GRADES 3–8 ELA AND MATHEMATICS TESTS BEFORE TESTING

The principal of each school ordering tests is responsible for making the necessary arrangements to safeguard all test materials by taking the following actions:

- Place all test booklets in a safe or vault as soon as they arrive at the storage site.
- Distribute only the nonsecure Teacher's Directions to proctors as soon as is practical after the shipment arrives.
- Ensure that no one opens the shrink-wrapped packages of secure test materials prior to the first day that each session of the test is scheduled to be administered in the school. Open the packages of test booklets just early enough to permit distribution of materials for each session being administered.
- Check the safe or vault daily to ensure that the test materials stored there have not been tampered with and remain secure.
- Safeguard the combination or key to the safe or vault to preclude access to the test materials by unauthorized persons.

TESTING SCHEDULE

Schools must arrange to administer the ELA and Mathematics Tests to students during the specified “Administration Dates” and “Make-up Dates” in the charts below. The ELA and Mathematics Tests are two sessions each per grade and must be administered over two consecutive school days.

Make-up dates are to be used for administering the tests to students who were absent during the designated administration dates. The make-up dates can also be used to complete the initial administrations in schools that were closed due to religious observance or unexpected events, such as power outages. When administering any make-up tests, maintain the same testing sequence whenever possible. For example, administer Session 1 first, followed by Session 2. Students must complete both test sessions to receive a final test result. A school district shall not penalize a student for refusing to participate in the Grades 3–8 State assessments.

ELA TEST ADMINISTRATION AND MAKE-UP DATES

| ELA Tests | Administration Dates | Make-up Dates |
|----------------------|--|--|
| Paper-based Tests | Wednesday, April 19 – Friday, April 21 | Monday, April 24 – Friday, April 28 |
| Computer-based Tests | Wednesday, April 19 – Wednesday, April 26 | Monday, April 24 – Friday, April 28 |

MATHEMATICS TEST ADMINISTRATION AND MAKE-UP DATES

| Mathematics Tests | Administration Dates | Make-up Dates |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Paper-based Tests | Tuesday, May 2 – Thursday, May 4 | Friday, May 5 – Thursday, May 11 |
| Computer-based Tests | Tuesday, May 2 – Tuesday, May 9 | Friday, May 5 – Thursday, May 11 |

TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH IEPs AND 504 PLANS

In general, students with disabilities must be provided with the testing accommodations specified in their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and Section 504 Accommodation Plans (504 Plans) when taking these tests. However, testing accommodations that change the constructs, or what a test is measuring, are not permitted on elementary- and intermediate-level State tests. In administering the 2023 Grades 3–8 ELA and Mathematics Tests to students with disabilities, schools should follow the guidelines on testing accommodations provided in the [2023 Grades 3–8 English Language Arts and Mathematics Tests School Administrator’s Manual](#). Additional guidance on testing accommodations for students with disabilities can be found in the Office of Special Education’s [Testing Accommodations for Students with Disabilities Guidance Document](#).

TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Information on accommodations for English Language Learners (ELLs) and former ELLs can be found in the [2023 Grades 3–8 English Language Arts and Mathematics Tests School Administrator’s Manual](#).

SCORING MATERIALS FOR THE GRADES 3–8 ELA AND MATHEMATICS TESTS

The scoring materials for the 2023 Grades 3–8 ELA and Mathematics Tests will be posted on Questar’s secure online platform, [Nextera Admin](#), under the “Help” tab. The scoring materials for ELA will be posted on Wednesday, April 19, 2023, and the scoring materials for math will be posted on Tuesday, May 2, 2023. CDs of scoring materials will no longer be available. Superintendents,

principals, and district test coordinators of all schools and districts with students enrolled in grades 3-8, were sent a “Welcome to Nextera” e-mail from Questar in September 2022 that provided temporary login credentials to Nextera Admin. Users were required to change their temporary password upon first login with their credentials. For assistance with accessing these materials, please contact Questar at 866-997-0695 or via e-mail to ny.3-8.help@questarai.com. It is the school’s responsibility to print all scoring materials needed for training and scoring. Schools are not permitted to share secure scoring materials with third party scoring vendors. Vendors must work directly with OSA to obtain secure scoring materials by emailing examrequest@nysed.gov.

SCORING OF THE GRADES 3–8 ELA AND MATHEMATICS TESTS

| Test | Scoring Dates |
|-------------|--|
| ELA | Monday, April 24, 2023 – Thursday, May 4, 2023 |
| Mathematics | Friday, May 5, 2023 – Wednesday, May 17, 2023 |

Teachers are **not** permitted to score their own students’ answer papers. In addition, teachers may not begin to train for scoring or rate student responses until the primary administration of the specific grade-level test that the teacher is rating has been administered in the teacher’s school. The [2023 Scoring Leader Handbook](#) provides information needed for the scoring of the ELA and Math Tests. Schools conducting CBT scoring activities should use this *Handbook* in conjunction with the [2023 ScorePoint Manual](#). Both the *Handbook* and *Manual* will be available on [OSA’s website](#).

SECURITY OF THE GRADES 3–8 ELA AND MATHEMATICS TESTS FOLLOWING TESTING

The Department will be releasing all of the test questions in ELA Test Session 2 and Mathematics Test Session 2 shortly after the scoring window has ended. Unused booklets for these test sessions may be used for instructional or staff development purposes after the scoring window has closed.

ELA Test Session 1 and Mathematics Test Session 1 must **not** be used for instructional or staff development purposes. The PBT booklets for these sessions must be returned to Questar. Principals should use the Secure Materials Report, included with their shipment of PBT booklets, to track the distribution and return of test materials within their school by security barcode numbers. This will help ensure that all Test Session 1 PBT booklets are accounted for and returned to Questar.

RETURN SHIPPING MATERIALS FOR ELA AND MATHEMATICS TEST BOOKLETS

All used and unused ELA Test Session 1 booklets and all used and unused Mathematics Test Session 1 booklets must be returned to Questar using the return shipping materials (including UPS return shipping labels), provided in the Return Kit.

For those schools that requested **both** ELA and mathematics paper-based test booklets, return shipping materials will be included with the schools’ shipment of mathematics test booklets **only**. Schools requesting both ELA and mathematics test booklets will not receive return shipping materials with their ELA test booklets shipment. (Note that any schools that requested only ELA test booklets will receive return shipping materials with their ELA test booklets shipment.)

Once return shipping materials are received, schools must return all used and unused ELA Test Session 1 booklets and all used and unused Mathematics Test Session 1 booklets to Questar between May 30, 2023, and June 9, 2023. Questar will send notifications to schools that fail to return these materials by June 9, 2023.

Schools are responsible for ensuring that the materials being returned to Questar do not include student answer sheets, used Test Session 1 Constructed-Response answer booklets (ELA only), or used Test Session 2 booklets. If you have any questions about the above process, please contact Questar at 866-997-0695 or via email to ny.3-8.help@questarai.com.

Destruction of Secure 2023 Test Materials for Grades 3–8 ELA and Mathematics Tests

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| Return via UPS to: Questar Assessment Inc. | Securely Destroy Upon Completion of Test Administration (for CBT only) | Store Securely in School or District for One Year , then Securely Destroy |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All used and unused printed English Language Arts Test Session 1 booklets • All used and unused printed Mathematics Test Session 1 booklets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All used scratch paper • Student login credentials, session access codes, and Proctor PINs • All used Mathematics Test Reference Sheets (Grades 5–8) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All used printed English Language Arts Test Session 1 Constructed-Response answer booklets • All used printed English Language Arts Test Session 2 booklets • All used printed Mathematics Test Session 2 booklets • All used printed answer sheets after their return from the scanning center |

SECURE STAND-ALONE GRADES 3–8 ELA AND MATHEMATICS FIELD TESTS

A critical part of the test development process is the field testing of questions in schools throughout the State in order to ensure the validity and reliability of the New York State Testing Program. The Department’s goal is to require the least amount of field testing necessary to build and administer high quality New York State assessments that provide accurate information about students’ achievement. These field tests contain questions that may only be used on New York State tests and benefit only New York students and schools.

| Field Test | | Administration Dates |
|--------------------------------|----------------|---|
| Grades 3-8 ELA and Mathematics | Computer-based | Monday, May 15, 2023 – Friday, June 2, 2023 |
| | Paper-based | Monday, May 22, 2023 – Friday, June 2, 2023 |

The field tests are designed to be completed by students in a single 40-minute class period. The field test does not need to be administered on the same day to every student in the field-tested grade. Schools can choose to administer the field test on as many days as they choose, within the field test window.

The Grades 3–8 ELA and Mathematics Field Tests must be administered within the field test window. Each school will determine the specific date(s) to administer the field tests during this prescribed time frame. If a student is absent on the day(s) the school administers the field test, there is no need for the student to make it up. Additional information will be available in the *Field Tests School Administrator’s Manual* that will be shipped to schools. Schools are expected to administer the assigned field test to all students in the selected grade who are participating in the spring 2023 Grades 3–8 ELA and Mathematics Tests, subject to the availability of special formats that some students may require. [Field test assignments](#) are posted on OSA’s website.

Paper-based field tests will be provided in regular, test read, large-type, and braille editions, as well as Spanish editions (for mathematics only). Schools are not expected to include students in the field test who are making use of an alternate language edition during the operational test (for mathematics only) that is not available for the field testing. Grades 3–8 ELA and Mathematics Field Tests will be delivered to schools by Questar the week before field testing. Questar will use the information your school submitted through the Department’s online examination request system to determine the appropriate quantity of field test materials for the Grades 3–8 ELA and Mathematics Field Tests. The field tests will be shipped to the approved secure storage site indicated by the principal in the online

examination request system. Step-by-step instructions for administering these field tests will be provided by Questar in the *Field Tests Teacher's Directions*. These instructions will be shipped to schools with the ELA and Mathematics Field Tests.

After the delivery of the field tests, principals must inventory the test materials and compare the number received with the quantities listed on the packing list. If any discrepancy is found between the packing list and the materials received, please contact Questar at 866-997-0695 or via e-mail to ny.3-8.help@questarai.com. Please note that shrink-wrapped packages of field test booklets must not be opened prior to the distribution of field tests to students.

For schools that chose to participate in the computer-based Grades 3–8 ELA and Mathematics Field Tests, schools will receive a package from Questar that will be shipped directly to schools and will contain the *Field Tests School Administrator's Manual* and *Field Tests Teacher's Directions* for the grade and subject assigned to the schools, as well as accommodated editions. For the computer-based mathematics field tests only, Spanish editions only will be available. Schools are not expected to include students in the field test who are making use of a special edition during the operational test that is not available for the field tests.

Following the administration of the stand-alone Grades 3–8 ELA and Mathematics Field Tests, schools must collect all of the field test materials and store them in a secure location until they are returned to Questar. Questar will provide schools with instructions for arranging the pre-paid pickups of the Grades 3–8 ELA and Mathematics Field Tests. **All** used and unused field test materials must be returned to Questar no later than Tuesday, June 6, 2023. Schools should follow the detailed instructions for returning the field test materials provided by Questar. The scoring of the Grades 3–8 ELA and Mathematics Field Tests will be conducted by Questar. Schools are not permitted to score or retain any copies of them.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have questions about any information appearing in this memorandum, please call 518-474-5902 or send an email to emscassessinfo@nysed.gov for assistance.

NOTE ON THE SPRING 2023 GRADE 8 SCIENCE TEST AND SPRING 2023 GRADES 5 AND 8 SCIENCE FIELD TESTS

You will receive a separate memorandum providing information concerning the procedures for administering the Spring 2023 Grade 8 Science Test and the Spring 2023 Grades 5 and 8 Science Field Tests.

Attachment A

SHIPMENT AND CHECKING OF THE 2023 ELA AND MATHEMATICS TEST MATERIALS

| Contents | Sender | Delivery Dates |
|--|---------------|---|
| <u>Secure</u> Grades 3–8 ELA Regular, Test Read, Braille, and Large-Type Edition Test Session 1 and 2 Booklets Nonsecure Teacher’s Directions | Questar | Tuesday, March 28 – Thursday, March 30 |
| <u>Secure</u> Grades 3–8 Mathematics Regular, Test Read, Braille, Large-Type, and Alternate Language Edition Test Session 1 and 2 Booklets Nonsecure Teacher’s Directions | Questar | Monday, April 24– Wednesday, April 26 |
| Printed instructions for administering Computer-based Stand-Alone Field Tests <u>Secure</u> Accommodated Editions of the Stand-Alone Field Tests for CBT Schools | Questar | Thursday, May 11 – Friday, May 12 |
| Printed instructions for administering Paper-based Stand-Alone Field Tests <u>Secure</u> Paper-based Stand-Alone Field Tests including Accommodated Editions | Questar | Thursday, May 18 – Friday, May 19 |

Schools that do not receive their Grades 3–8 ELA test booklets and teacher’s directions by 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 30, 2023, or their Grades 3–8 Mathematics test booklets and teacher’s directions by 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 26, 2023, should contact Questar at 866-997-0695 or via e-mail to ny.3-8.help@questarai.com.