



Assistant Commissioner  
Office of State Assessment

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

**FROM:** Steven E. Katz *Steven E Katz*

**SUBJECT:** Procedures for Requesting, Shipping, and Storing of Materials for the 2021 Administration of the New York State Grade 4 Elementary-Level and Grade 8 Intermediate-Level Science Tests

This memorandum provides information concerning procedures for requesting, shipping, and storing materials for the Grade 4 Elementary-Level and the Grade 8 Intermediate-Level Science Tests.

As the 2020-21 school year gets underway, NYSED and the Board of Regents continue to make our primary focus the physical and mental health, safety, and well-being of the children and adults in our schools. We continue to be mindful of the many uncertainties faced statewide and nationally, and we will continuously monitor the situation and provide updated guidance, as the situation requires.

This will include NYSED and the Board of Regents closely monitoring the feasibility and fairness of administering the Grade 4 Elementary-Level and Grade 8 Intermediate-Level Science Tests next spring. At this time, no final decision regarding the 2021 Grade 4 Elementary-Level and Grade 8 Intermediate-Level Science Tests has been made. Keeping this in mind, we are sharing the following information as a means to prepare should it be deemed feasible to proceed with the Spring 2021 test administrations in person in schools throughout the State.

This [memorandum](#) and all information in subsequent e-mails pertaining to these tests will be available on the Department's website. If you have questions concerning the requesting of test materials, or about any of the other information contained herein, please use the telephone and fax numbers for the Office of State Assessment (OSA) listed on the last page of this memorandum to receive assistance.

Schools have received a separate memorandum providing information concerning the procedures for requesting, shipping, and storing the Grades 3-8 English Language Arts and Mathematics Tests and information concerning computer-based testing.

**Notifications for 2021**

**Online requests for the Grade 4 Elementary-Level and Grade 8 Intermediate-Level Science Tests must be submitted by February 5, 2021.**

**The Grade 4 Elementary-Level and Grade 8 Intermediate-Level Science Tests will be available in Arabic, Bengali, Chinese (Simplified), Korean, and Russian.** Chinese (Traditional), Haitian Creole and Spanish editions of the science tests will continue to be available.

Schools will be able to track their shipments of Grade 4 Elementary-Level and Grade 8 Intermediate-Level Science Tests examination materials through a “Track Packages” feature available on the school’s information page in the [online examination request system](http://portal.nysed.gov) (<http://portal.nysed.gov>). Please contact the Operations Group at 518-474-8220 with any questions.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

All editions of the Grade 4 Elementary-Level and the Grade 8 Intermediate-Level Science Tests must be requested through the [online examination request system](http://portal.nysed.gov) (<http://portal.nysed.gov>). Directions for using this system are included in this memorandum and in the *Instructions for Submitting Requests for the Grades 4 and 8 Science Tests* (DET 902S). **Online requests for these tests must be submitted by February 5, 2021.** Schools must submit their examination requests under their own BEDS code. Requests for two or more schools in a district must **not** be combined into one request. Within three business days after your request has been entered, you will be sent a confirmation notice via e-mail indicating the number of examinations requested and the address to which they will be shipped. **It is of the utmost importance that you carefully check all e-mailed confirmation notices as soon as they are received to ensure that the correct quantities of materials will be shipped and to determine whether or not additional materials are needed.**

Administrators who find that they need additional test materials for any elementary- or intermediate-level tests may return to the online examination request system to revise or add any supplemental quantities needed up until the window for submitting requests online has ended. Telephone requests will not be accepted.

An updated confirmation notice will be e-mailed to the school. It should be checked immediately in order to ensure that the materials to be shipped include the additional request. **Please make every effort to make any modifications to initial requests for any tests as soon as possible.**

All schools administering New York State elementary- and intermediate-level tests **must** contract with a Regional Information Center (RIC) or large-city scanning center in order to obtain answer sheets and scanning services. When ordering tests on the online examination request system, schools must identify the RIC or large-city scanning center with which they have contracted. Schools will **not** be able to proceed with ordering State tests until this information has been entered. A complete [list of RICs and large-city scanning centers](#) is available on the Department’s website.

## STUDENTS TO BE TESTED

Except as noted below, all public and charter school students in Grades 3 through 8 must take all State tests administered for their grade level. This includes students who have been retained in these grades. The chronological ages of students with disabilities who are ungraded should be used to determine who must be tested and which grade-level tests they must take.

When determining which students will be participating in these tests, be sure to consider also those students who attend programs outside of the school. BOCES, religious, and independent schools within New York State providing special education programs for students placed there by public school districts should submit requests in order to cover the students enrolled in their programs. Public schools should **not** request test materials for students enrolled in such special education placements but should confer with the special education programs in order to ensure that they will be requesting the tests that will be needed.

- **The Grade 8 Intermediate-Level Science Test** should be administered to students in the grade in which they will have received instruction in all of the material in the *Intermediate-Level Science Core Curriculum (5–8)*. While this is typically Grade 8, the test may also be

administered to students in Grade 7 who will have completed all of the material in the *Intermediate-Level Science Core Curriculum (5–8)* and are being considered for placement in an accelerated high-school-level science course when they are in Grade 8. The school may not use this assessment to retest any Grade 8 students who participated in this assessment during the previous school year as Grade 7 students. Schools are expected to administer this assessment to those Grade 8 students who did not take this assessment during the previous school year as Grade 7 students, unless such students will be taking a Regents Examination in science at the end of the school year. School principals have the discretion to either require or waive the Grade 8 Intermediate-Level Science Test for those accelerated Grade 8 students who did not take this exam during the previous school year but who will be taking a Regents Examination in science at the end of the school year in which they complete Grade 8. For those accelerated students for whom the school waives the Grade 8 Intermediate-Level Science Test, the student's achievement in science will be measured by the student's performance on the Regents Examination in science.

- **English Language Learners (ELLs).** Part 154 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education requires that the language arts proficiency of all ELLs be tested annually. All ELLs, regardless of grade, must take the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT). Instructions for requesting the NYSESLAT have been e-mailed to schools.

All ELLs are required to participate in the State's science tests. ELLs may take the science tests in English or an alternative language, whichever is better for the student. Beginning in 2021, the Grade 4 Elementary-Level and Grade 8 Intermediate-Level Science Tests will now be available in Arabic, Bengali, Chinese (Simplified), Korean, and Russian. Chinese (Traditional), Haitian Creole and Spanish editions of the science tests will continue to be available.

These tests may also be translated orally into other languages for those ELLs whose first language is one for which a written translation is not available from the Department. Schools are permitted to offer ELLs specific testing accommodations when taking these tests. These accommodations are detailed in the respective test manuals.

- **Former English Language Learners (ELLs).** Schools may provide the testing accommodations available to ELLs to Former ELLs who met the exiting criteria specified in Part 154-2 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education and were exited from ELL status following their participation in one of the two most recent administrations of the NYSESLAT. Such students either achieved an overall level of Commanding on the spring 2018 or spring 2019 administration of the NYSESLAT or achieved an overall level of Expanding on the most recent administration of the NYSESLAT **and** scored at Level 3 or higher on the New York State Grades 3–8 ELA Tests during that same school year.

These accommodations may not be provided to Former ELLs who achieved the exiting criteria through NYSESLAT administration more than two school years ago. Additional guidance on the identification of Former ELLs is available on the Department's website.

- **Students with Disabilities.** The Committee on Special Education (CSE) must decide for each student, on a case-by-case basis, whether or not the student will participate in the general State test or in the New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA) for students with severe cognitive disabilities. The CSE's decision must be documented in the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP). The [criteria](#) that the CSE must use to determine eligibility for the NYSAA is available on the Department's website.

## REQUESTING EXAMINATION MATERIALS

### Username and Passwords

You must have a username and password in order to enter your school's examination requests online. If you were the principal of the same school during the 2019–20 school year, the expectation is that you have previously been issued a valid username and password. Use those to log onto the online examination request system. Telephone requests will not be accepted.

If you were the principal of the same school during the 2019–20 school year, but you have forgotten your password or you need to reset your password, access the "Reset Password" utility available from <http://portal.nysed.gov>. More information on this utility may be obtained from the Department's Delegated Account System (SEDDAS) [Help Desk](#).

If you are a **new** principal for your school and do not have a valid username and password, determine which of the following situations applies to you.

- **Principals of New York City Public Schools:** Contact your Borough Assessment Implementation Director (BAID) at your Borough Assessment Office (BAO).
- **Principals of Public Schools or BOCES Programs Located Outside of New York City:** Contact your School Superintendent or Delegated Administrator to request a username and password.
- **Principals of Religious and Independent Schools and Charter Schools:** Contact the Department's Delegated Account System (SEDDAS) [Help Desk](#) to obtain your username and password. If you have not yet done so, you must notify the Department's Office of Information and Reporting Services by going to [Dat support](#) and entering your information. The information that must be included can be found on the [Information and Reporting Services](#) website.

All questions regarding usernames and passwords for public schools must be directed to your Delegated Administrator in your local school district or, for religious and independent and charter schools, the SEDDAS Help Desk.

### Requesting and Packing Information

- *Regular Test Booklets:* Test booklets are shipped in packages of 25. Enter the number of students who will be tested with regular test materials, **not** the number of packages of booklets. You may request up to 5% above current enrollment to allow for possible changes in enrollment. If you try to request above that cap, you will receive an error message. If that occurs, please e-mail [examrequest@nysed.gov](mailto:examrequest@nysed.gov) for assistance.
- *Braille and Large-Type Test Materials:* Because of the expense incurred by the Department in the production of braille and large-type tests, request on the online examination request system only the **exact number** of braille and large-type test materials needed for students whose IEP or Section 504 Accommodation Plan (504 Plan) specifically requires either of these accommodations.
- *Alternative Language Test Booklets:* For all languages, request the **exact number** of test booklets needed. Spanish editions are shipped in packages of 25.
- *Performance Test Station Diagrams for Science Tests:* Ten sets (enough to test 30 students at one time) of the station diagrams for the performance test components of the Grade 4 Elementary-Level Science Test and the Grade 8 Intermediate-Level Science Test will be sent automatically to each school requesting these tests. Braille, large-type, and alternative language editions of the station diagrams will be provided based on the number of those booklets requested.
- *Answer Sheets:* The Department does **not** provide answer sheets. Schools must make arrangements with a RIC or large-city scanning center for these.

- *Performance Test Kits*: The Department does **not** provide performance test kits. Details on the equipment and materials needed and a list of suppliers for performance test kits are included in the respective manuals.

### **Shipping of Test Materials**

All test shipments will be delivered by UPS and may be delivered at any time between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

Schools are able to track their shipments of Grade 4 Elementary-Level and Grade 8 Intermediate-Level Science Tests examination materials through a “Track Packages” feature available on the school’s information page in the [online examination request system](http://portal.nysed.gov) (<http://portal.nysed.gov>). Please contact the Operations Group at 518-474-8220 with any questions.

### **Storage of Test Materials**

While it is not required that the Grade 4 Elementary-Level Science Test or the Grade 8 Intermediate-Level Science Test be stored in a safe or vault, they **must** be stored in a secure location. All secure test materials must be placed in the storage location as soon as they are received. Access to the test materials must be restricted in order to ensure that test security is maintained.

If you indicate that your tests will be stored at an alternate storage location other than the one indicated in the shipping information on the School Information page when requesting tests via the online examination request system, you will be required to complete the *Examination Storage Plan* form found on the online examination request system and fax it to OSA. Tests stored at such a location must **not** be transferred to the school where the tests will be administered until the day scheduled for the administration of that part of the test.

Tests and secure materials (**including performance test kits**) may not be removed from any secure storage location until the day scheduled for the administration of each part of the test, except during the inventory of test materials when the test shipment is received. The shrink-wrapped packages of secure test materials must **not** be opened during the inventory. All secure test materials must remain sealed until the test administration date (with the exception of the materials needed to conduct the orientation for administrators of the science performance tests). The shrink-wrapped packages of the science station diagrams may be opened when the stations for the performance test are being set up. All scoring key packages must remain sealed until the tests have been administered in the school.

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

For questions regarding the requesting, storing, and administering of the New York State Grade 4 Elementary-Level and Grade 8 Intermediate-Level Science Tests, please call the Operations Group at 518-474-8220.

For other questions regarding State assessments, please call OSA’s main number at 518-474-5900. OSA’s e-mail address is [emscassessinfo@nysed.gov](mailto:emscassessinfo@nysed.gov).

Fax supplemental requests for the New York State Grade 4 Elementary-Level and Grade 8 Intermediate-Level Science Tests to 518-474-2021.

Other faxes regarding test administration may be sent to 518-474-1989.