



Director of Test Administration
Office of State Assessment

October 2025

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

FROM: Clara DeSorbo

SUBJECT: Procedures for Requesting, Shipping, and Storing Materials for the Spring 2026 Administration of the New York State Grades 3–8 English Language Arts and Mathematics Tests and the Elementary-level (Grade 5) and Intermediate-level (Grade 8) Science Tests

This memorandum provides information concerning the Spring 2026 Grades 3–8 English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics Tests and the Elementary-level (Grade 5) and Intermediate-level (Grade 8) Science Tests.

GENERAL INFORMATION

As detailed in the [Statewide Implementation of Computer-based Testing memorandum](#), students in all grades will be required to take the 2026 Grades 3–8 English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics Tests and the Elementary-level (Grade 5) and Intermediate-level (Grade 8) Science Tests on the computer (please see pages 2–3 for additional information).

The Grades 3–8 ELA and Mathematics Tests and the Elementary-level (Grade 5) and Intermediate-level (Grade 8) Science Tests must be requested through the Department's [online examination request system](#) by **November 14, 2025**. Within three business days after a school's request has been submitted, the school will be sent a confirmation notice, via email, indicating the number of students being tested, number of printed tests being shipped, and the address to which they will be shipped. Principals are reminded to carefully check all email confirmation notices to ensure that the number of students to be tested by computer was entered for all grade levels under the "Regular" edition column and that all accommodated editions (large type, braille, test read, and for the math and science tests only, alternate language tests) needed for their students were requested.

Administrators who find that they need additional materials for any of the tests may return to the online examination request system to change their request up until the closing of the online examination request system on November 14, 2025. After any changes are made to a school's request, an updated confirmation notice will be emailed to the principal.

Detailed directions for using the online examination request system are included in the [Instructions for Submitting Online Requests for the Grades 3–8 English Language Arts and Mathematics Tests and the Elementary-level \(Grade 5\) and Intermediate-level \(Grade 8\) Science Tests](#) (DET 902).

Schools must contract with a RIC or large-city scanning center to report computer-based testing (CBT) data to the New York State Student Information Repository System (SIRS). When requesting tests on the online examination request system, schools must verify the RIC or large-city scanning center with which they have contracted. 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 3–8 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.

- **The Grades 6–8 Mathematics Tests:** Grades 6–8 students who are receiving instruction in a commencement-level mathematics course and will take a Regents Examination in mathematics are not required to take the respective Grade 6, 7, or 8 mathematics tests. School districts are allowed to administer only the Regents Examination in mathematics to these students, eliminating the need for students accelerated in mathematics to take both tests.
- **The Intermediate-level (Grade 8) Science Test:** This test should be administered to students in the grade in which they will have completed all the material in the *NYS P-12 Science Learning Standards (MS)*. 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 *NYS P-12 Science Learning Standards (MS)* 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. Grade 7 and 8 students who are receiving instruction in a commencement-level science course and will take a Regents Examination in science are not required to take the Intermediate-level (Grade 8) Science Test. School districts are allowed to administer only the Regents Examination in science to these students, eliminating the need for students accelerated in science to take both tests.
- **English Language Learners (ELLs):** Schools are permitted to exempt from the 2026 Grades 3–8 ELA Tests only those ELLs (including those from Puerto Rico) who, on April 1, 2026, will have been attending school in the United States for the first time for less than one year. Recently arrived ELLs may be eligible for *one exemption* from the administration of the Grades 3–8 ELA Tests. Subject to this limitation, schools may administer the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT) in lieu of the Grades 3–8 ELA Tests to recently arrived ELLs who meet the criterion above. All other ELLs must participate in the Grades 3–8 ELA Tests, as well as in the NYSESLAT. Instructions for requesting the NYSESLAT are emailed separately to schools.

All ELLs are required to participate in the State's mathematics and science tests. ELLs may take the mathematics or science tests in English or an alternate language, whichever is most beneficial for the student. The Grades 3–8 Mathematics Tests and the Elementary-level (Grade 5) and Intermediate-level (Grade 8) Science Tests will be available in Arabic, Bengali, Chinese (Simplified), Chinese (Traditional), Haitian Creole, Korean, Russian, and Spanish. All alternate language editions of the mathematics and science tests will be paper editions. The tests can also be translated orally into other languages for those ELLs whose home language is one for which an alternate language edition is not available from the Department.

- **Students with Disabilities:** The Committee on Special Education (CSE) must decide for each student, on a case-by-case basis, whether 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 IEP. The criteria that the CSE must use to determine eligibility for the [NYSAA](#) is available on the Department's website.

OPERATIONAL COMPUTER-BASED TESTING

Students in all grades will be required to take the 2026 operational ELA, mathematics, and science tests on the computer. The only exceptions are for those students who must test on paper according to their Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Accommodation Plan (504 Plan), and for the mathematics and science tests only, for those students who require an alternate language edition of the test or an oral translation for a lower incidence language. These students should test on the same days as

their computer-based testing (CBT) grade classmates. In addition, paper-based testing (PBT) will remain available to religious and independent schools, who do not make use of technology in the classroom because of religious beliefs (please see page 4 for additional information). The Department does not provide answer sheets for PBT. All schools administering New York State tests by PBT must contract with a [Regional Information Center \(RIC\) or large-city scanning center](#) to obtain answer sheets and scanning services.

All alternate language editions of the mathematics and science tests, as well as large type and braille editions, requested in the online examination request system, will be paper-based tests. As the Department moves toward full implementation of computer-based testing, it is critical to ensure that students who are entitled to accommodations are receiving them when taking the tests. After reviewing best practices and consulting with experts in equitable assessment practices, the Department has standardized the ordering and accommodations process. The English edition will be provided to all students via computer with accommodated paper editions provided to students that require them (e.g., large type, braille, and alternate language editions). This approach will ensure equity by providing access to the accommodations students need to demonstrate what they know and are able to do.

CBT schools with students who must test on paper according to their IEP or 504 Plan, or for the mathematics and science tests, only, require an oral translation, should request test read copies for those students in the online examination request system. All test read copies are paper editions. Detailed directions for requesting tests are included in the [Instructions for Submitting Online Requests for the Grades 3–8 English Language Arts and Mathematics Tests and the Elementary-level \(Grade 5\) and Intermediate-level \(Grade 8\) Science Tests](#) (DET 902).

Please note: If a student with accommodations needs to take the constructed-response items on paper, they must take the entire test on paper and therefore a test read copy should be requested for them (for the ELA and mathematics tests this means that **both Session 1 and Session 2** must be taken on paper and for the science tests this means that the singular science session must be completely taken on paper).

When requesting any alternate language paper editions, schools will automatically receive the corresponding paper copies of the English editions to provide as a testing accommodation. Students should be instructed to record all their responses in only one of the two editions. Students who have developed higher levels of English proficiency may prefer to take the English edition of the test on computer, with the alternate language paper edition serving as a secondary resource. The decision to test ELL students with CBT or on paper is a local decision based on the needs of the student.

Please note: If an ELL student needs to take the constructed-response items on paper, they must take the entire test on paper (for the mathematics tests this means that **both Session 1 and Session 2** must be taken on paper and for the science tests this means that the singular science session must be completely taken on paper). For students that will respond to questions in their home language, it is also important that consideration is given to ensuring they are able to do this in the most efficient and fair manner. This will often be via a paper-based test, especially for languages that do not use the Latin Alphabet. ELLs requiring an oral translation for a lower incidence language must test solely on paper.

Schools can use the [Question Sampler](#) and the [Secure Browser Practice Tests](#) to help determine which format (computer or paper) is best based on the individual student's needs for both students with accommodations or ELL students.

- **Training on CBT:** In partnership with its contractor, NWEA, the Office of State Assessment (OSA) will offer recorded trainings throughout the school year to help prepare schools for the upcoming Spring 2026 CBT administration. Additional information on the recorded trainings will be posted on [CBT Support](#) where schools will find helpful CBT resources, including links to CBT manuals, tutorial videos, and Quick Reference Guides.

- **Scoring of Computer-Entered Student Responses/Selection of a Lead Scoring Entity for ELA and Mathematics:** ScorePoint must be used to score all constructed responses for operational CBT. Access to NWEA's ScorePoint computer-based scoring system is provided at no charge for schools participating in operational CBT. Schools must designate a Lead Scoring Entity when placing their request for operational CBT. The Lead Scoring Entity can be a school, district, BOCES, or scoring vendor. Scoring models permitted by the Department for CBT are limited to: Regional Scoring, Three or More Schools from Two Districts, Three or More Schools Within a District, and Scoring Vendors. Scoring vendors must contact OSA to sign a nondisclosure agreement to receive secure scoring materials and access to the ScorePoint system. For CBT scoring, teachers will not score assessments from their own school. Please note that schools may select a different Lead Scoring Entity for ELA and mathematics. For those schools that previously administered operational CBT, their Lead Scoring Entity will be pre-populated. These schools must check the Lead Scoring Entity listed for them and change as needed.
- **State-level Scoring of Computer-based Elementary- and Intermediate-level Science Tests:** The Elementary-level (Grade 5) and Intermediate-level (Grade 8) Science Computer-based Tests will be sent to NYSED's contractor, NWEA, for statewide scoring. Schools do not need to plan for the scoring of the Science computer-based tests. However, schools will still be responsible for the scoring of Science paper-based tests (i.e., accommodated editions).
- **Verification of Technology Readiness and Participation in the Statewide CBT Simulation:** All schools participating in operational CBT must complete the Technology Readiness Checklist within the Nextera Administration System (Nextera Admin) by **December 26, 2025**. This fall, information regarding the Technology Readiness Checklist and information on how to log into Nextera Admin will be emailed to schools. Information on the [Technology Readiness Checklist](#) is also available on CBT Support. It is the responsibility of the principal to ensure that the Technology Readiness Checklist is completed each year for their school. Completing the checklist helps ensure schools are properly prepared to administer the operational tests by CBT in the spring and helps identify any concerns that should be addressed before then.

Schools are also required to participate in the Statewide CBT Simulation. The Statewide CBT Simulation will take place from **January 26, 2026 – February 6, 2026**. Additional information on the Statewide CBT Simulation can be found on [CBT Support](#).

RELIGIOUS AND INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

There is a paper-based testing (PBT) option only for those religious and independent schools who do not make use of technology in the classroom because of religious beliefs. As this is a religious accommodation, it is not for schools that prefer to administer paper-based tests over computer-based tests. A religious or independent school interested in the PBT option due to religious beliefs will need to complete and email an attestation form, that will be available on the [Office of Religious and Independent School Support's \(ORISS\) website](#), to examrequest@nysed.gov. After the form is reviewed and approved, the school will then be able to request paper-based tests in the online examination request system. Schools that have previously submitted a form that was reviewed and approved do not need to resubmit a new form for this school year.

STORAGE OF SECURE TEST MATERIALS

The printed ELA, mathematics, and science tests are secure and must be stored in the safe or vault of the building to which the tests will be shipped. 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 to ensure that test security is maintained. If the building where the tests will be administered does not have a safe or vault large enough to hold the tests, arrangements must be made to store these tests at a school or district location with an appropriate safe or vault. If a school's tests will be stored at an alternate storage location other than the one indicated in the shipping information on the School Information page on the online examination request system, they will be required to complete the *Examination Storage Plan* form, which can be found on the

online examination request system. 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.

FIELD TESTING

There will be no stand-alone field testing for the Grades 3–8 ELA and Mathematics Tests or the Elementary-level (Grade 5) and Intermediate-level (Grade 8) Science Tests during the 2025–26 school year.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For questions regarding the requesting of the Grades 3–8 ELA and Mathematics Tests or the Elementary-level (Grade 5) and Intermediate-level (Grade 8) Science Tests, please contact OSA's Operations Group at 518-474-8220 or via email to examrequest@nysed.gov.

For questions regarding CBT, please email cbtsupport@nysed.gov for assistance.

For other questions regarding State assessments, please contact OSA at 518-474-5902 or via email to emscassessinfo@nysed.gov.

Online requests for the Grades 3–8 ELA and Mathematics Tests and the Elementary-level (Grade 5) and Intermediate-level (Grade 8) Science Tests must be submitted in the [online examination request system](#) by **November 14, 2025**. Starting November 17, 2025, schools should reach out as follows for additional test materials:

- ELA or mathematics test materials: please contact NWEA via email to NYTesting@nwea.org.
- Science test materials: please contact OSA's Operations Group via email to examrequest@nysed.gov.