



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: December 1, 2021

To: Chief School Administrators, Charter School and Renaissance School Project Leads, Directors of Approved Private Schools for Students with Disabilities

Route To: High School Principals, Directors of Guidance, Directors of Special Education, Bilingual/ESL Coordinators, District Test Coordinators

From: Gilbert E. Gonzalez, Acting Assistant Commissioner
Division of Teaching and Learning Services

Deadline: Friday, May 6, 2022 (to ensure processing in time for graduation ceremony)

Portfolio Appeals Process – Enhancements and Information for 2021-2022 Submissions

The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) is pleased to announce that the portfolio appeals process has been enhanced to support a fully electronic submission process, eliminating the exchange of paper portfolios between districts and the NJDOE. Districts may begin submitting their portfolio appeals through the electronic submission process beginning January 3, 2022.

To fulfill the assessment component of the New Jersey high school graduation requirements, a student must demonstrate proficiency in both English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. Any 12th grade student in the class of 2022, including students with disabilities and English language learners, may do this via three pathways as explained in the [New Jersey High School Graduation Assessment Requirements](#) document.

The NJDOE understands that the COVID-19 pandemic changed the trajectory of statewide assessment opportunities. The portfolio appeals process provides an opportunity for students in the class of 2022 to meet the graduation assessment requirement. This memo explains the enhanced 2021-2022 portfolio appeals process, which is to be completed in accordance with *N.J.S.A. 18A:7C-3* and *N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1*, for students scheduled to graduate in spring 2022 who have not yet met the state graduation assessment requirement for ELA and/or mathematics.

Portfolio Appeals Timeline

The portfolio appeal must be submitted in accordance with the following timelines:

- The portfolio submission process begins on Monday, January 3, 2022. Districts may begin submitting the required documentation through [NJDOE Homeroom](#) on this date.
- All portfolio appeals must be submitted by **Friday, May 6, 2022** to ensure adequate processing time for graduation ceremonies.
- Districts will be notified of NJDOE decisions regarding their portfolio appeals through NJDOE Homeroom on a rolling basis.
- Appeals submitted after May 6, 2022 will still be reviewed, but the NJDOE cannot guarantee that decisions will be communicated to the district in time for the student to participate in spring 2022 graduation ceremonies.

New and Enhanced Portfolio Appeals Procedures

Electronic Submission Process

For the 2021-2022 school year, the NJDOE will be accepting portfolio appeals submissions electronically beginning January 3, 2022. With limited exceptions, the NJDOE will accept submissions **only** through this electronic submission process; paper submissions will no longer be accepted. In preparation for the electronic submission, each district must designate a portfolio appeals coordinator. This person will need to be assigned to the Portfolio Appeals project in NJDOE Homeroom, which will be available beginning on December 13, 2021. Within the Portfolio Appeals application in NJDOE Homeroom, the portfolio appeals coordinator will find the templates that will need to be completed and submitted along with resources that will facilitate successful submission of files in NJDOE Homeroom.

The following templates will need to be completed and uploaded to NJDOE Homeroom by districts that are submitting portfolio appeals for students in the class of 2022:

- Statement of Assurance (SOA) for Portfolio Appeals
 - Outlines the portfolio appeals requirements and expectations.
 - Requires the signatures of the portfolio appeals coordinator, high school principal and chief school administrator to verify that the portfolio appeals process has been completed with integrity in accordance with *N.J.S.A. 18A:7C-3* and *N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1*.
 - Must be completed for each school within the district.
- Portfolio Appeals Data Spreadsheet
 - Provides districts with a standardized submission template and includes a variety of commonly used, required fields (e.g., Accountable District Code, State Student Identifier).
 - Includes ELA and mathematics specific fields for districts to submit students' scores on Constructed Response Tasks (CRTs).

The following resources will be available in NJDOE Homeroom to support districts in successfully completing and submitting the required documents:

- [Portfolio Appeals Submission Process for 2021-2022](#)
 - Provides information on the electronic submissions process.
 - Outlines in-district portfolio appeals documentation requirements.
- Portfolio Appeals Data Spreadsheet 2021-2022 Field Definitions
 - Provides the information needed to populate values in the Portfolio Appeals Data Spreadsheet.
 - Includes the field name, field length requirements, field definitions, field notes, and expected values.
- Portfolio Appeals Electronic Submission Video Tutorial
 - Demonstrates steps for a successful electronic submission.
 - Guides portfolio appeals coordinators to the location where they will find communications from the NJDOE.

District-Maintained Portfolio Appeals Documents

Districts are expected to store their students' completed portfolio appeals materials onsite in accordance with local document retention policies. On-site review of these documents may occur at the discretion of the NJDOE. Below is a list of the materials that must be maintained in-district for each student:

- A completed [Education Proficiency Plan \(EPP\)](#) that includes the most current student transcript, documentation of performance on Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)/New Jersey Student Learning Assessment (NJSLA) and/or substitute competency assessments,

and an intervention plan implemented to ensure the student met the graduation assessment requirement.

- CRTs in the content areas (ELA and/or mathematics) in which the student has not met the graduation assessment requirement.
- The required quantity of a student's graded responses to CRTs in each content area.
- A content-specific cover sheet found in the Informational Guide for ELA and/or mathematics.

All documents related to the above materials can be found on the [Graduation Assessment Requirement](#) webpage under the section Graduation Portfolio Appeal.

Technical Assistance Opportunities

To support districts with the new electronic submission process, technical assistance opportunities will be available to portfolio appeals coordinators on the following dates:

- Thursday, January 6, 2022 – 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.
- Tuesday, January 11, 2022 – 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.
- Thursday, January 13, 2022 – 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.

Registration for the technical assistance sessions will occur through the Portfolio Appeals project in NJDOE Homeroom. Under the "Resources" section of the application, portfolio appeals coordinators will see registration links for each session.

Reminder: CRT Requirements

Requirements for the CRTs in ELA and Mathematics

The CRTs are designed, administered, and graded locally. The CRTs must be designed to demonstrate that the student has core ELA and mathematical competencies equivalent to the expectations of the [NJSLA Evidence Statements](#). Please note that districts may use their existing CRTs for ELA and/or mathematics in the 2022 portfolio appeals process.

If a district chooses not to use existing CRTs, the district may use revised, refreshed, or newly created CRTs for the 2022 portfolio appeals process if the revised, refreshed, or newly created CRTs demonstrate that the student holds core competencies equivalent to:

- **For ELA CRTs:** The expectations of the NJSLA ELA [Reading](#) and [Writing Evidence Statements](#) for high school.
- **For Mathematics CRTs:** The expectations of NJSLA Mathematics Reasoning (C) or Modeling (D) Evidence Statements for [Algebra I](#), [Geometry](#), and/or [Algebra II](#).

ELA

Review the NJDOE's [Informational Guide for the English Language Arts](#) Portfolio Appeals Process for content-specific guidance. The ELA reading and writing cover sheets are included at the end of the guide. Writing must be scored using the [ELA Scoring Rubrics](#).

Mathematics

For content-specific guidance, review the NJDOE's [Informational Guide for the Mathematics](#) Portfolio Appeals Process. The mathematics cover sheet is included at the end of the guide.

Supporting Special Populations

Students in special populations, such as English language learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities, can participate in the portfolio appeals process and receive appropriate accommodations.

It is recommended that districts, as appropriate, encourage students with disabilities to participate in the portfolio appeals process if they have not yet met the graduation assessment requirement for ELA and/or mathematics.

For English language learners, districts may translate CRTs into a student's native language and the student may respond in his/her native language. The portfolio appeals program also allows for the use of electronic translators (e.g., Google Translate, Microsoft Translator, Dragon speak, etc.). The district must translate or transcribe the student's responses and the CRTs into English.

Review the [Special Populations Guidance for Portfolio Appeals](#) for additional information and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).

Contact information

If you have any questions, please contact the NJDOE's Office of Assessments at assessment@doe.nj.gov or (609) 376-3960.

c: Members, State Board of Education
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NJDOE Staff
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network
Garden State Coalition of Schools
NJ LEE Group