



Binghamton City School District

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April 1, 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian,

This April and May we will be administering the New York State ELA and Math assessments in grades 3 – 8. These performance-based assessments were established in 1999 and have occurred annually since then, except for 2020 during the initial COVID pandemic. New York State is required by the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to administer these assessments to guarantee that all students attending public schools are receiving a strong academic foundation and federal funding to support it.

ELA Testing (April 19-29 window)

- Tuesday April 20 - 3, 4, 5, 8 Paper Based (cohort A), CBT Grades 6, 7
- Thursday April 22 - 3, 4, 5, 8 Paper Based (cohort B), CBT Grades 6, 7
 - *Make-ups for Cohort A – Monday 4/26, Tuesday 4/27*
 - *Make-ups for Cohort B – Friday 4/23, Thursday 4/29*

Math Testing (May 3-13 window)

- Tuesday May 4 - 3, 4, 5, 8 Paper Based (cohort A), CBT Grades 6, 7
- Thursday May 6 - 3, 4, 5, 8 Paper Based (cohort B), Grades 6, 7
 - *Make-ups for Cohort A – Monday May 10, Tuesday May 11*
 - *Make-ups for Cohort B – Friday May 7, Thursday May 13, Friday May 14*

For the above schedule, please note that in the Binghamton CSD Grades 6 and 7 will participate in Computer-Based Testing while Grades 3, 4, 5, and 8 will participate via paper-based testing. All test questions continue to be written by NYS educators.

This year, New York State has shortened the tests by removing field test questions. While NYS is offering districts the opportunity to give students the entire two-day test, *Binghamton has chosen to only offer Day 1 portion of the exam.* The exam will be one day, with that test portion existing entirely of multiple-choice questions. Grade 3 ELA, for example, contains approximately 20 multiple choice questions while Grades 4-8 ELA contain around 28 such questions. *There will not be any constructed response or writing questions on this year's administered assessment.* We will use our own, locally development writing assessment to gauge student progress.

Participation in Assessments

This year, New York State is not requiring districts to test 95% of all students, acknowledging the challenges posed by COVID. It is important, however, that we prepare for and maintain a calm and structured assessment program in our buildings. Some parents have chosen to remove their students from participation. As a district, we have worked with families to ensure that all students will be respected for their choices. Students should be taking the assessments in an environment free from disruptions.

Educating, empowering and challenging all students to become productive, global citizens through innovative approaches to learning.

- **Refusal to participate:** If you decide to instruct your child not to participate in any portion of these assessments, **please contact your school in writing** (and we will follow up with a phone call to you) by **Thursday, April 15, 2021.**
- **Please note that fully remote students are NOT expected to participate in these assessments; only hybrid and in-person learners will sit for the assessment per New York State's guidance. Students engaging in fully remote instruction are *not* required to come into the school building to take the assessment.** If your student is learning in a fully remote model and you would like them to sit for the assessment, please contact your building principal by April 15th.
 - Decisions need to be made prior to the testing period to ensure that the school's testing schedule can be finalized; therefore, please consider your options carefully at this time.
 - Students whose parents/guardians have provided prior notice that they will not be participating will be assigned to report to an alternate location.

Please feel free to contact me at (607) 762-8100 x202 if you have questions related to the New York State assessment program or the content of this letter.

Sincerely,



Dr. Larry Dake
Assistant Superintendent for Instruction & Budget