

ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES FOR NJ ASK 3-8 SPANISH LANGUAGE ASSESSMENTS

In response to the growing Spanish-speaking student enrollment in New Jersey schools, and the need to ensure that all students are accurately assessed and their progress in meeting the Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS) accounted for, the Department of Education has made the commitment to continue to offer Spanish-language versions of the statewide elementary and middle grade state assessments. Spanish-language versions of the statewide assessments in mathematics, language arts literacy, and science are available for grades 3-8. These translated Spanish versions will be administered to eligible students in place of the English-language versions administered to all other students.

These Spanish language versions of the NJ ASK 3-8 assessments are being offered to districts as an accommodation. Districts may choose to administer these Spanish-language versions to students for whom the district believes they are a more appropriate measure of student achievement of the Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS). In making this determination, districts should consider the following factors:

- The entry year into the United States and the length of time students have been enrolled in US schools;
- The English language proficiency of students; and
- The student's program of instruction.

Please note: Newly arrived Spanish-speaking students into U.S. schools and who are currently enrolled in a language assistance program on or after July 1, 2009, are no longer exempt from participating in the Language Arts Literacy section of the test.

Student scores will be included in the usual district and school performance summary reports; however, Spanish-language Individual Student Reports (ISR) will be provided to assist parents and students in understanding the scores.

This accommodation should normally be reserved for native Spanish-speakers: 1) for whom the current school year (2008-2009) represents their first or second year of enrollment in a public school in the United States; 2) whose English language proficiency may be described as *Entering* or *Beginning*; or, in some cases, *Developing* in accordance with the *WIDA English Language Proficiency Standards for English Language Learners in Grades K to 12*; and/or 3) who are instructed in a bilingual education program that includes literacy and mathematics instruction in the native language. Districts should make decisions about the ordering and administration of Spanish-language test materials on the basis of multiple measures of student English language proficiency. The table below provides guidance for making decisions regarding which students would benefit from taking the assessment in Spanish.

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Entry Year into US School	Level of Language Proficiency	Bilingual/ESL Program Instruction	ESL-Only Instruction	Test Recommended
Entered in current school year 2009-10	Entering/Beginning	Yes	Yes	Spanish
Entered US school during 2008-09 school year	Entering to Developing	Yes	Yes	Spanish
Entered US school during the 2007-08 school year	Developing to Reaching	Yes	Yes	English language test with accommodations

Criteria for Performance Definitions Descriptive of the Levels of English Language Proficiency for WIDA’s English Language Proficiency Standards

At the given level of English language proficiency, English language learners process, understand, produce, or use:

6- Reaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • specialized or technical language reflective of the content area at grade level • a variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity in extended oral or written discourse as required by the specified grade level • oral or written communication in English comparable to proficient English peers
5- Bridging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the technical language of the content areas; • a variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity in extended oral or written discourse, including stories, essays, or reports; • oral or written language approaching comparability to that of proficient English peers when presented with grade level material

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4- Expanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• specific and some technical language of the content areas;• a variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity in oral discourse or multiple, related sentences or paragraphs;• oral or written language with minimal phonological, syntactic, or semantic errors that do not impede the overall meaning of the communication when presented with oral or written connected discourse with visual, graphic, or interactive support
3- Developing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• general and some specific language of the content areas;• expanded sentences in oral interaction or written paragraphs;• oral or written language with phonological, syntactic, or semantic errors that may impede the communication, but retain much of its meaning, when presented with oral or written, narrative or expository descriptions with visual, graphic, or interactive support
2- Beginning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• general language related to the content areas;• phrases or short sentences;• oral or written language with phonological, syntactic, or semantic errors that often impede the meaning of the communication when presented with one to multiple-step commands, directions, questions, or a series of statements with visual, graphic, or interactive support
1- Entering	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• pictorial or graphic representation of the language of the content areas;• words or chunks of language when presented with one-step commands, directions, WH- or choice questions, or statements with visual, graphic, or interactive support

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1Q: Are the New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJ ASK) Spanish version test takers provided any accommodations during the administration of the test?

1A: Yes. Students participating in the Spanish version of the NJ ASK, in grades 3 through 8, may have the following accommodations:

- Additional time up to 150% of the administration times indicated.
- Use of a bilingual dictionary, preferable one normally used by the student(s) as part of the instructional program. Dictionaries should be checked before testing begins to ensure no reference information or papers are inside them (no electronic dictionaries). The dictionary must be a word-for-word translation document.

2Q: May a student who is eligible to participate in the NJ ASK Spanish version of the test, participate in the English version in one content area and in the Spanish version in the other(s)?

2A: Yes. If students are not receiving language assistance instruction and/or services in all the tested content areas, then participating in both language versions of the test is permissible.

3Q: Are newly arrived (i.e., on or after July 1, 2009) Spanish-speaking students encouraged to take the NJ ASK Spanish version assessments in their native language?

3A: Yes. Please note that for adequate yearly progress (AYP) calculations, time in school and time in district will be less than a year. Please contact the Office of Title I Program Planning and Accountability at 609-943-4283 for questions and issues pertaining to AYP.

4Q: Will students who participate in the NJ ASK Spanish version of the test be penalized for responding in English?

4A: No, students who respond in English on the Spanish version of the test will not be penalized. However, it is expected that students who are participating in the Spanish version of the test will respond in Spanish.

If you have any questions regarding the NJ ASK 3-8 Spanish version tests, please feel free to contact the Office of State Assessments at 609-341-3456.