



Livingston PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Superintendent of Schools

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Dear Parent/Guardian:

In the spring of 2019, your student participated in the first year of the New Jersey Student Learning Assessment for Science (NJSLA-Science). The NJSLA-Science is administered to all New Jersey public school students in grades 5, 8 and 11. It provides information to parents, educators, school districts and the New Jersey Department of Education information about how students are performing on the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Science (NJSLS-Science).

Given the novel coronavirus pandemic, your student's Individual Student Report (ISR) will not be mailed home this year. However, a sample of the ISR is included with this letter for your review and you may access your child's scores on the Genesis Parent Portal. The ISR report helps parents/guardians and educators understand their student's performance in science. The report also includes charts and graphics that show you how well your student is performing in specific skills and how your student's performance compares to other students in their school, district and state.

Overall scores for students in the Livingston Public Schools were higher than the State average and were comparable to other high-achieving school districts in our area. This was the first administration of the test in this format. Scores throughout New Jersey were markedly lower than they had been on the former state science test, which was given for many years. We are reflecting on all aspects of this new test and the subsequent results. We are hoping to get some additional data from the Department of Education to help us better understand the implications. As we look at individual student scores it is important to remember that this is a brand new assessment, and is significantly different from past assessments. Our knowledge of this format and the value of the results is still developing. Consequently, this one score is certainly not a definitive measure of any students' scientific ability or understanding.

Reviewing the results from statewide testing can be a helpful tool in measuring your student's progress with the NJSLS-Science. It is just one of the many ways your student's teachers and administrators can measure student performance. The scores from this first year of the assessment set a new baseline from which science performance in New Jersey schools will be measured moving forward.

How did your student perform using the domains and practices?

The domains are the content components related to specific disciplines of science.

The practices are methods by which scientists investigate and build models and theories about the world.

Earth & Space Science

Your student's performance is **Below Expectations**.

A student designated as Near/Met Expectations demonstrates knowledge of the processes that operate on and within the Earth and also its place in the solar system and galaxy.

Investigating Practices

Your student's performance is **Above Expectations**.

A student designated as Near/Met Expectations asks questions, plans and carries out investigations based on observations of phenomena, and organizes the data effectively.

Life Science

Your student's performance is **Above Expectations**.

A student designated as Near/Met Expectations demonstrates knowledge of patterns, processes, and relationships of living organisms.

Sensemaking Practices

Your student's performance is **Below Expectations**.

A student designated as Near/Met Expectations recognizes patterns and relationships in data to develop explanations or models of the phenomena.

Physical Science




Your student's performance is **Above Expectations**.

A student designated as Near/Met Expectations demonstrates knowledge of the mechanisms of cause and effect in all systems and processes that can be understood through a common set of physical and chemical processes.

Critiquing Practices

Your student's performance is **Near/Met Expectations**.

A student designated as Near/Met Expectations evaluates and creates arguments regarding different explanations and claims to convey a deeper understanding of the natural world.

LEGEND		
	Below Expectations	
	Near/Met Expectations	Above Expectations

How will my student's school use the test results?

Results from the test give your student's teacher information about his/her academic performance. The results also give your school and school district important information to make improvements to the education program and to teaching.

Learn more about the New Jersey Learning Standards

Explore your school website, or ask your principal, for information on your school's annual assessment schedule; the curriculum chosen by your district to give students more hands-on learning experiences that meet state standards; and to learn more about how test results contribute to school improvements. You can also learn more about New Jersey's K-12 standards at <https://www.nj.gov/education/aps/cccs/science/>.

Districts may assign Not Tested or Void codes for students that did not receive a scale score. For more information see the Score Interpretation Guide at www.measinc.com/nj/science.

Frequently Asked Questions About NJSLA-Science:

Why did we need a new test?

- A new test was needed to measure the state's new, more rigorous science standards (NJSLA-Science) that are informing classroom instruction.
- The NJSLA-Science standards were adopted by the state in 2014. The timeline for transition to the new standards for districts required full implementation in grades 6-12 by September 2016 and full implementation in grades K-5 by September 2017.
- These standards focus on the skills students need in the real world, such as critical thinking, analyzing, and problem solving.

Does a student have to pass the NJSLA-Science to graduate?

- The NJSLA-Science is not a state graduation assessment requirement.

Why do the scores look different from the scores from the previous state science tests?

- The NJSLA-Science reflects new expectations outlined in the new science standards, the NJSLA-Science, which focuses on the application of science knowledge and skills.
- The prior assessment, New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJ ASK), emphasized the memorization of content.

Should you have any additional questions, please contact either Brian Carey, Science Supervisor Gr. 7-12 (bcarey@livingston.org) or Dr. Dorian Gemellaro, Science Supervisor, Gr. PK-6 (dgemellaro@livingston.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matthew J. Block". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Matthew J. Block, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

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