

New Jersey Student Learning Standards

In 1996, the New Jersey State Board of Education adopted the state's first set of academic standards called the Core Curriculum Content Standards. The standards described what students should know and be able to do upon completion of a thirteen-year public school education. Over the last twenty years, New Jersey's academic standards have laid the foundation for local district curricula that is used by teachers in their daily lesson plans. Revised every five years, the standards provide local school districts with clear and specific benchmarks for student achievement in nine content areas.

On June 3, 2020, the State Board of Education adopted the 2020 NJSLs in the following content areas:

- [Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills](#);
- [Comprehensive Health and Physical Education](#);
- [Computer Science & Design Thinking](#);
- [Science](#);
- [Social Studies](#);
- [Visual and Performing Arts](#);
- [and World Languages](#).

These standards truly represent a foundation from which districts will build coherent curriculum and instruction that prepares each New Jersey student with the knowledge and skills to succeed in our rapidly changing world. They will put New Jersey again at the forefront of national education by including the following:

- Climate Change across all content areas, leveraging the passion students have shown for this critical issue and providing them opportunities to develop a deep understanding of the science behind the changes and to explore the solutions our world desperately needs;
- Computer programming in all grade bands K-12, ensuring all students receive a 22nd-century education in the critical computational thinking skills that are the underpinning of so much of our work and so many of our transactions; and
- National standards for science and visual and performing arts, ensuring access to, and opportunity in, science and the arts, for every New Jersey public student.

The New Jersey Student Learning Standards in [English Language Arts](#) and [Mathematics](#) were adopted by the New Jersey State Board of Education in May 2016 and are not currently under review. [English Language Arts Instructional Units](#) and [Mathematics Instructional Units](#) were created in collaboration with educator teams to assist districts in creating standards-based curriculum and assessment.

Curriculum Implementation Schedule

By September 2022	
LINKS TO FULL STANDARDS	LINKS TO SUMMARY OF CHANGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Standard 1: Visual and Performing Arts• Standard 2: Comprehensive Health and Physical Education• Standard 5: Science• Standard 6: Social Studies• Standard 7: World Languages• Standard 8: Computer Science and Design Thinking• Standard 9: Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Standard 1: Visual and Performing Arts (Not available)• Standard 2: Comprehensive Health and Physical Education• Standard 5: Science• Standard 6: Social Studies• Standard 7: World Languages• Standard 8: Computer Science and Design Thinking• Standard 9: Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills

EXCUSAL FROM CLASS OR PROGRAM

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:35-4.7, any child whose parent or guardian presents to the school a signed statement that any **part** of instruction in health, family life education, or sex education is in conflict with his or her conscience or sincerely held moral or religious beliefs shall be excused from that **portion** of the course (not the entire health course, only that portion or any part of instruction). Requests must be presented in a signed statement, include the **specific standard** for excusal, and submitted to the building principal. As with many other aspects of state mandated curriculum, the New Jersey Legislature has not provided an option to opt out of the requirements under P.L. 2001, c. 32. Rest assured that we are implementing this curriculum in a way that is consistent with state law, that addresses universal

principles such as respect and dignity for all, and that does not promote any political ideology. If you have specific questions about aspects of the curriculum, please feel free to contact us.

(BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY 5250): The Board of Education directs that a student be excused from any part of the instructions in health education, family life education, sex education, or instruction that includes dissection of animals that the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of the student or the adult student finds morally, conscientiously, or religiously offensive. A request for excusal must be presented in a signed statement and submitted to the Principal. An excused student shall be assigned to an alternate program of independent study on a substitute topic within the health education, family life education, or sex education program. The parent's or legal guardian's right of excusal applies to any alternate program as well. No excused student will be penalized by loss of credit as a result of his/her excusal, but a student will be held accountable for successful completion of any alternate program assigned. (N.J.S.A. 18A:35-4.7)

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION CONTACTS

- 21st-Century Life and Careers: Office of Career Readiness – cte@doe.nj.gov
- Comprehensive Health & Physical Education: Lennie Parham – lennie.parham@doe.nj.gov
- English Language Arts: Erika Leak – erika.leak@doe.nj.gov
- Mathematics: Deidre Richardson - deidre.richardson@doe.nj.gov
- Science: Michael Heinz - michael.heinz@doe.nj.gov
- Social Studies: Ashley Woolsey-Greene - ashley.woolsey-greene@doe.nj.gov
- Technology/Computer Science & Design Thinking: Christopher Cox - christopher.cox@doe.nj.gov
- Visual & Performing Arts: vparts@doe.nj.gov
- World Languages: - worldlang@doe.nj.gov

The New Jersey State Board of Education

The New Jersey State Board of Education has 13 members who are appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the New Jersey State Senate. These members serve without compensation for six-year terms. By law, at least three members of the State Board must be women, and no two members may be appointed from the same county. The Commissioner of Education serves as both the secretary and as its official agent for all purposes. The State Board also has a nonvoting student representative selected annually by the New Jersey Association of Student Councils.

The State Board adopts the administrative code, which sets the rules needed to implement state education law. Such rules cover the supervision and governance of the state's 2,500 public schools, which serve 1.38 million students. In addition, the State Board advises on educational policies proposed by the Commissioner and confirms Department of Education staff appointments made by the Commissioner. The State Board conducts public meetings in Trenton on the first Wednesday of each month. The State Board Office publishes an [agenda](#) in advance of each meeting to notify the public of the items that the State Board will be considering. The public is invited to participate by providing comments on proposed rules either at a public testimony session or by submitting written comments on proposed rules. Proposed rules for education in the state are also published in the *New Jersey Register*. Written comments on proposed rules are accepted 30 to 60 days following publication in the Register and may be sent to the State Board office at the Department of Education. The State Board can be contacted by emailing stateboardoffice@doe.nj.gov.

Cape May County Department of Education

The Cape May County Superintendent of Schools/Office of Education serves as a focal point of general support, oversight and routine communication between local districts and the New Jersey Department of Education. The County Office is lead by an Executive County Superintendent and a core staff, which includes an Executive County Business Official, ECBO, a County Education Specialist, CES, and a County Supervisor of Child Study, CSCS. The Office provides services to local school districts in the areas of budgeting/finance, operations and facilities, curriculum and instruction, special education, teacher evaluation and certification, transportation, and monitoring and compliance.

NJDOE Curricular Frameworks

The New Jersey Department of Education's Division of Teaching and Learning has developed new curricular frameworks for English language arts and mathematics for kindergarten through grade twelve. The frameworks are aligned with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for English language arts and mathematics and will replace the model curricula for those subjects. The purpose of the frameworks is to provide educators with a tool to guide conversations around curriculum and instruction that should be taking place in schools/districts around the state. The frameworks focus on the standards and skills in order to provide a logical sequence of instruction with the goal of mastering the standards at each grade level.

New Jersey State Assessments

The Office of State Assessments (OSA) coordinates the development and implementation of New Jersey's statewide assessment program, which is designed to measure student attainment of the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards. The OSA works collaboratively, within the department, and with school districts, to collect and report information about student academic achievement in order to inform instruction, increase student learning, and help parents and the public assess the effectiveness of their schools.

Wilson Reading Program

OCHS offers students the Wilson Reading Program. This program is a reading and writing program designed for students with dyslexia or language-based difficulties. It teaches students decoding and encoding (spelling) skills.

NGSS

The Next Generation Science Standards introduce an exciting approach to science instruction. These new standards, or performance expectations, link three dimensions of learning. These are the Core Ideas, Crosscutting Concepts and Science & Engineering practices. Implementation of the new standards began in the 2016-2017 school year for grades 6 and above. The kindergarten through fifth grade implementation occurred in the 2017 - 2018 school year. Updates to the standards were released this past spring and will be reviewed and addressed by September of 2021.

The **Crosscutting Concepts** invites students to explore the connections within Earth and Space Science, Life Science, Physical Science, and Engineering design as well as allows them to see these connections across many curricular areas. Some examples of these would include cause and effect relationships and patterns. We see the use of patterns in science, art, spelling, math and many other content areas. This helps students understand the "science" behind much of our lives.

The **Science and Engineering Practices** involve the process by which scientists investigate and explore the world around us. The new standards follow an inquiry based approach to learning. By using this "hands on" approach to studying, students have a deeper understanding of our world and can better apply that knowledge in any setting.

The **Disciplinary Core Ideas** are those key ideas in science that have the broadest level of importance within science and engineering. They are grouped traditionally into the four domains of Life Science, Earth and Space Science, Physical Science and Engineering. These domains would include the study of the universe, life cycles, ecosystems, biology, matter and energy, waves, and engineering design, to name a few.

New Jersey Department of Education

In addition to its policy and regulatory roles in the state's education system, the Department of Education is in charge of a variety of functions that require a transaction with the department. The services include certification of teachers and administrators; application to be an approved provider; purchasing; granting charters to charter schools; offering grant opportunities; and various other services.

Statewide Assessment Schedule

The Federal Legislation *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB) requires that each state administer annual standards-based assessments to students in grades 3 through 8, and at least once in high school. Federal expectation is that each state will provide tests that are grounded in rigorous state content standards and that assess student achievement in language arts literacy, mathematics and, at three benchmark grade levels, science.

New Jersey Student Learning Assessment

Each spring, the New Jersey Department of Education requires all students in grades three through eleven to take an annual computer-based assessment in math and language arts. Beginning Spring 2019, the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), was replaced by the new state assessment called the New Jersey Student Learning Assessment (NJSLA) for Mathematics and English Language Arts (ELA).

The New Jersey Student Learning Assessments (NJSLA) are aligned to the New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS), which focus on critical thinking skills and students' ability to read, write, speak, listen and solve "real-world" problems independently. The standards were developed with the goal of ensuring all students are college and career ready and were internationally benchmarked to ensure students are academically competitive with their peers around the world.

The New Jersey Student Learning Assessments are intended to mark students' progress towards the stated goal of college and career readiness. The assessments are also meant to provide feedback to the district regarding the efficacy of our current curriculum and instruction.