



Margate City Board of Education

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NJSLA (New Jersey Student Learning Assessment) is a state-mandated test that school districts are required to administer. The information provided by the NJSLA assessments will inform both schools and parents about a student's progress toward meeting the goal of being college or career ready. The data derived from the assessment will be utilized to pinpoint areas of difficulty and customize instruction accordingly. In addition, parents should be aware that some high schools request NJSLA scores for acceptance into their programs. The New Jersey State Department of Education has left it up to local school districts to address situations in which parents refuse the test on behalf of their children.

In the Margate School District, we recognize that a sensible, fair, and child-centered set of protocols for those parents who refuse to have their children tested is in the best interest of all students. We also recognize that clearly communicating those protocols in advance will avoid unnecessary confusion and misinformation as the testing dates approach. In outlining the protocols below, we are not endorsing a refusal to test. Rather, our goal is to minimize stress for children and families, enable our school to plan appropriately for space and other logistical considerations on the days of testing, and to enhance the smooth implementation of the NJSLA assessments that we are legally required to administer.

PROTOCOL FOR PARENTS WHO REFUSE TO ALLOW THEIR CHILDREN TO TAKE THE MANDATED NJSLA STANDARDIZED ASSESSMENTS:

When a student does not participate in the annual test, we all miss out on valuable information. As a school district, the NJSLA test helps us determine whether or not we are guiding our students to master standards and academic content. As a parent, the test will help you do the same while providing your child valuable experience with a testing format that he/she will encounter in high school and beyond.

STATEMENT

For the above mentioned reasons, we highly encourage all parents to allow their children to take the NJSLA test. However, if the decision is made for your child NOT to participate, we ask that parents submit a written statement TO HIS/HER PRINCIPAL prior to the actual dates of testing documenting a refusal for their children to participate in the NJSLA assessments. We strongly urge parents contemplating the submission of such a statement to do so prior to MARCH 1st so that our schools may plan accordingly. Statements would, of course, be accepted after that date but later submission may hamper the implementation of the accommodations outlined below. We encourage you to retain a copy of your written statement.

STUDENTS

Children in the elementary and middle school grades whose parents have submitted a written statement of refusal and who attend school on a NJSLA testing day will be marked present for the day. All students are required and encouraged to attend school even if their parents have submitted refusals. During the testing period, “refusal” children will be located in a room separate from the testing environment and will be asked to complete an alternative, appropriate assignment independently and quietly while supervised by a staff member. The length of each test will vary every day, and we encourage those children not sitting for the test to bring a favorite book or other materials to read quietly during that time in case they complete their school work.

ATTENDANCE

Children whose parents have NOT submitted a written statement of refusal but who are not present on the days of the assessments will be marked absent and will sit for the NJSLA make up sessions as scheduled. Similarly, children whose parents have not submitted a written statement of refusal and who arrive at school after the testing is completed will be marked tardy for the day and absent for the test. Those children will also be required to sit for the NJSLA make up sessions as scheduled. Children whose parents have submitted a written statement of refusal who do not attend school during testing will be marked absent. Those children will NOT be required to sit for the NJSLA make up sessions. It is important to note that the regular attendance policy for excused and unexcused absences remains in effect for all students whether or not they are taking the test. Thus, even if parents refuse to have their children participate in the NJSLA assessments, children should be sent to school on time on the testing days unless there is a verified reason not to do so (doctor’s note for illness and other good cause as deemed by the administration).

RECORDING AND REPORTING

In the past, when parents chose not to allow their children to take the state-mandated assessments, the school was required to record the test as a “not tested” and to include the student’s ID number on an “irregularity” report. Please be assured that whatever record-keeping measures the State requires of the district will not affect a refusing student’s class grades or attendance records.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For more information about the state assessment, please visit Parent Resources for NJSLA on the Curriculum, Assessment, and Technology page of the Margate Schools website.