



Howell Township Public Schools

Joseph J. Isola
jisola@howell.k12.nj.us

(732) 751-2480 ext. 3828
FAX (732) 919-1060

April 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian:

In the spring of 2019, your child 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 \(NJSLA-Science\)](#). Information regarding the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Science can be found at <https://www.nj.gov/education/aps/cccs/science/>.

The Individual Student Report (ISR) for your child is now available for your review. This report helps parents/guardians and educators understand your child's performance in science. The report also includes charts and graphics that show you how well your child is performing in specific skills and how your child's performance compares to other students in their school, as well as the district and state. Reviewing results from statewide testing is one tool for measuring your child's progress with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Science. It is just one of the many ways your child'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.

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 New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Science (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 focus 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 questions, please contact your child's current principal, vice principal or guidance counselor by email.

Sincerely,

Joseph Isola
Superintendent