Test Administration Manual

iMSSA

Table of Contents

Overview

Cognia™ iMSSA assesses college and career readiness standards for students in grades 3–8 in the following areas:

- Reading
- Language Usage
- Mathematics

Assessments are administered three times per school year. For the current iMSSA test schedule, refer to the PED Testing Calendar at webnew.ped.state.nm.us/bureaus/assessment-3/district-test-coordinator.

For more information about the structure, format, and content of the assessments, see the *iMSSA Interim Assessments Overview* at newmexico.onlinehelp.cognia.org/imssa.

This manual discusses how to administer the interim assessments, from training staff and preparation of classrooms and students to test security procedures, accessibility, and accommodations information.

> **If you need support during the test administration process, contact Cognia Customer Care Center at nmtechsupport@cognia.org or call 877.676.6722.**

Preparing for Test Administration

Roles and Responsibilities

Test coordinators and test administrators are responsible for ensuring that test administration proceeds smoothly. Within the portal, there are permissions assigned to several system-level roles that support the functions of the staff at both the district and school level.

In general, test coordinators oversee the test administration at the district and/or school level. As preparation begins, test coordinators perform the following tasks:

- Determine the test administration window.
- Inform the district and schools about student participation and the testing schedule.
- Guide school personnel through preparation of the testing environment, including facilitating the upload of organization, user, and student data and ensuring that the devices used for testing are properly configured.
- Train staff on test-taking procedures.
- Manage reporting data and analysis.

Test administrators (typically teachers) perform the following tasks:

- Set expectations for student participation and the schedule.
- Prepare the testing environment.
- Create the online test sessions in the portal.
- Distribute login information.
- Manage student requests and other issues that might arise during testing, including maintaining security.
- Ensure that students have completed and submitted tests.

For more information about the system roles and permissions within the portal, refer to the _NMPED Assessments Portal User Guide_.

Roster Data Requirements

Before testing can begin, the test coordinator ensures that all student information has been correctly loaded into the administration portal and students have been assigned appropriate accommodations and accessibility supports.

For more information about how to roster students and templates, refer to the _NMPED Assessments Portal User Guide_ and newmexico.onlinehelp.cognia.org/imssa.

Test Security

New Mexico Public Education Department (PED) and Cognia test security policies are designed to protect student data, test data, and test content. The quality and usefulness of the assessment data that iMSSA generates depend greatly on the uniformity of test administrations and the security of test materials. All district staff who participate in test administration are responsible for ensuring that the administration takes place in accordance with the guidelines set forth by Cognia.

Failure by district or school administrators, teachers, or students to follow test security rules could create a test security irregularity. Examples of these irregularities include improper behavior, cheating, and security breaches. Whether intentional or unintentional, irregularities in testing might cause delays in reporting results, create invalid results that would not be helpful to classroom teachers and students, or compromise the secure administration of the assessments.

Test coordinators are responsible for ensuring that the iMSSA administration follows the guidelines set forth by Cognia for reporting irregularities. If testing irregularities occur, you might need to reset individual or group tests or invalidate test results. Refer to _Test Security Policies and Procedures_ for more details about security policies, definitions of irregularities, and instructions for reporting irregularities and invalidating tests.

Training and Documentation

The test coordinator, in coordination with Cognia, should schedule training for the test administrators and any school staff who will have a role in administering iMSSA.

To ensure a smooth administration, before you administer iMSSA, read the documentation thoroughly and familiarize yourself with the procedures. Following the procedures carefully and consistently is important for providing an appropriate and beneficial testing environment for all students.

Names and descriptions of all the documentation are listed in Table 1. Links to online applications and documentation that you need in order to implement iMSSA are at newmexico.onlinehelp.cognia.org/imssa.

Table 1: Documentation

Name	Description
NMPED Assessments Technology Guidelines 2020–2021	This document lists the minimum hardware, software, and operating system requirements that testing devices must meet in order to run New Mexico Public Education Department Assessments.
NMPED Assessments Kiosk Installation Guide 2020–2021	This document provides installation instructions for the secure testing kiosk, technical requirements for operating the kiosk on local networks, and site readiness testing instructions.
NMPED Assessments Portal User Guide 2020–2021	This document provides instruction on how to perform all administrative tasks in the portal for test administration. Instruction is provided on how to access and navigate the portal, manage user accounts, upload Pre-ID files, transfer students, manage student data & accessibility features/accommodations, create classes, schedule test sessions, and monitor testing status for all New Mexico Public Education Department Assessments.
Test Administration Manual	This document provides test administration information for district of school test coordinators and test administrators.
Parent Letter Template	This letter introduces the families of students to the iMSSA.

Name	Description
Test Security Policies and Procedures	This document discusses test security and the procedures for reporting irregularities.
Testing Irregularity Reporting Form	Use this document to report testing irregularities. Refer to Test Security Policies and Procedures for instructions on how and when to use this form.
NM QuickStart User Guides	These one-to-two-page documents each provide information about a different test administration task or student navigation.
NMPED Assessments Quickstart Student Interface	This document outlines the functionality of the student testing interface accessible by both browser and secure kiosk.
NMPED Assessments Reporting User Guide 2020–2021	This document provides instruction on how to use the reporting features within the portal.
NMPED Assessments Browser Testing User Guide 2020–2021	This technology guide illustrates how to access the New Mexico Public Education Department Student Testing Interface Web Browser and log in to the iMSSA Interim Assessments and Formative program. It explains the Tools, Accessibility features, and Accommodations available within the application and how to use them. It provides guidance for offline scenarios, error messages, and contains troubleshooting tips.
NMPED Assessments Testing with Third Party Assistive Technology 2020–2021	This guide describes when and how to use third party accessibility tools with the iTester Student Test Interface using a browser or the NMPED Assessments Kiosk.
NMPED Assessments Technical Guide for Spanish Language Support 2020–2021	This guide describes when and how to conduct Spanish language tests and use the Spanish TTS accommodation.

The training should cover the following topics:

- Test security and the need for staff to carefully follow instructions and scripts
- Any student accommodations that will be provided
- The testing schedule for your school, including the makeup testing schedule and assignments
- Test administration tasks and procedures

Accessibility and Student Accommodations

For iMSSA, a set of universal tools is offered to all students. The tools that are available in a test depend on the type of test and session. These tools appear as additional buttons in the student testing interface. One example of a universal tool available across all content areas is screen magnification or zoom. For more information about the tools available, refer to the following:

- *NMPED Assessments Kiosk User Guide 2020–2021*
- *NMPED Assessments Browser Testing User Guide 2020–2021*
- *NMPED Assessments Quickstart Student Interface*

The test coordinator works with district administration and school or district test administrators to determine the expectations for student participation (voluntary or mandatory) in iMSSA. In general, only students should read and respond to the questions during a test session, except when students are provided **valid** accommodations based on needs indicated on an individualized education plan (IEP) or 504 plan or for English learners (ELs). An individual student's educational team is responsible for making decisions regarding accommodations.

For students requiring accessibility features, additional tools can be made available such as color contrast, a text-to-speech (TTS) tool for mathematics, and a masking tool to cover up portions of the screen.

There are three ways to adjust a student's accessibility features and accommodations for iMSSA:

- Set the accommodations during the roster data uploading process.
- Set the accommodations using the accommodations upload feature.
- Set the accommodations manually for a student within the portal.

For more information about the universal tools, accessibility features, and accommodations available, refer to the following:

- *NMPED Assessments Portal User Guide 2020–2021*
- *NMPED Assessments Kiosk User Guide 2020–2021*
- *NMPED Assessments Browser Testing User Guide 2020–2021*
- *NMPED Assessments Testing with Third Party Assistive Technology 2020–2021*

Student Preparation

Before testing, the test coordinator works with the school district to notify students and parents of the upcoming test administration. Use the *Parent Letter Template* at newmexico.onlinehelp.cognia.org/imssa to explain the purpose of the test and the testing schedule for your school.

The test administrators ensure that students are properly instructed in the use of test materials and are given the opportunity to do their best. It is important for students to see the assessment as a rewarding exercise, rather than as a source of anxiety.

The following tasks are important when preparing students for testing:

- Using the Student Tutorial, give students the opportunity to practice the test, including using the universal tools and accommodations.
- Tell students the approximate time needed for each test session. Explain that the test is untimed, and they may take more time if needed.
- Make sure that every student is given the appropriate materials, including computers, for the grade and content areas of each test session.

- Be aware of district or school policies regarding when a student's responses suggest that a student's physical/emotional health or personal safety might be in jeopardy. Referrals to the appropriate local school or district personnel should be confidential.
- Refer to the _Test Administration Scripts_ for the test that you plan to offer.

Scheduling and the Testing Environment

Scheduling the assessments, choosing the location for testing, and preparing the testing environment are all key to a successful administration. This includes knowing which materials are allowed and what test administrators can and cannot do or say.

Scheduling

Test sessions can be created for a class and a content area test. Depending on the content area, tests might contain one section or two. For more information about how to create test sessions, review the following:

- _NMPED Assessments Portal User Guide 2020–2021_
- _NMPED Assessments Quickstart Creating Classes_
- _NMPED Assessments Quickstart Scheduling Test Sessions_

Before testing begins, follow the requirements in this section to develop the school's testing schedule. It is important that students and staff are made aware of the testing schedule and the timing of the tests.

Schools may schedule each grade-level assessment at a convenient time within the established testing window. However, within a school, you should administer each test session to all students in a particular grade within the shortest time possible. This minimizes exposure to and discussion of the test questions.
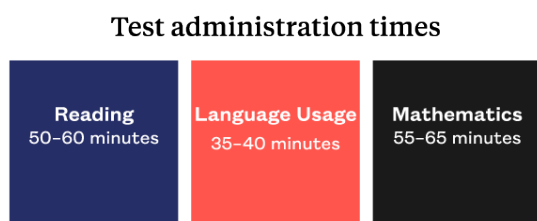
For example, in an ideal case, all grade 5 students in a particular school will take Mathematics Section 1 at the same time. In schools where students will share computers, it might not be possible to schedule concurrent test sessions. In addition, students taking the test with certain accommodations, or who are taking makeup tests, might require a different schedule.

Here are some guidelines for scheduling:

- Students who require more time should be able to continue under supervision until they finish testing; however, students who do not finish a particular section of the test in one day are **not** allowed to return to that section on another day.
- If a particular student is known to typically require extended time, start the test session early enough in the day so that you can accommodate the student's needs.
- Never begin a section of any test unless there is ample time to complete it.

Figure 1 provides the approximate durations for iMSSA, which is an untimed test. Note that the durations are estimates for planning purposes and that individual students may require additional time.

Figure 1: iMSSA Estimated Durations

Test administration times

| Reading | Language Usage | Mathematics |
| 50–60 minutes | 35–40 minutes | 55–65 minutes |

Testing Environment

The test coordinator and test administrators should create a testing environment that follows the security specifications and is comfortable for students.

The ideal testing location should have comfortable seating, a sufficient number of workspaces, and good lighting. The room should be adequately ventilated and free from distractions. Use a computer lab or classroom for testing, if possible.

Designate enough computer lab or classroom spaces in your schedule to allow for the following:

- Testing as many students in a grade at the same time as possible, while still allowing sufficient personal space and maintaining the required ratio of Test Administrators and Proctors
- Separate classroom space for makeup testing
- Providing accommodations for those students who have been approved to receive them
- Avoiding testing in areas such as auditoriums, cafeterias, libraries, hallways, study halls, or other non-classroom settings. These are likely to be uncomfortable, noisy, and distracting.

Do the following to create an ideal testing environment:

- Arrange for sufficient numbers of Test Administrators and Proctors to supervise testing.
- Seat students with enough space between them in order to minimize opportunities to look at each other's work.
- Remove or cover any reference materials in the classroom, including those on walls or desks.
- If you are unable to remove or cover materials that might create an advantage during testing, reposition students' desks so that the materials are not visible.
- Do not allow dictionaries or thesauruses of any type during any session of the assessment. The only exception is in the case of English learners, who may use word-to-word translation dictionaries for the Mathematics tests only.
- Do not allow outside calculators in the testing room. For the section of the Mathematics test that requires the use of a calculator, students may use the calculator tool that is available within the test.
- Place TESTING – DO NOT DISTURB signs on the doors or post them in hallways and entrances. If possible, reroute hallway traffic to promote optimum testing conditions.

Test Administration

A successful test administration depends upon the following:

- everyone following the provided directions
- the test administrator monitoring students' progress in the student testing interface
- maintaining security in the room

Giving Test Directions

To ensure accurate achievement results, all test administrators should follow the same procedures and read aloud the same directions while administering the tests. Refer to the *Test Administration Scripts* for the specific script for each test.

Students must understand the directions, how to choose answers, and how to use the online tools before testing begins. A test administrator or proctor should assist students with test-taking procedures but should also be careful not to inadvertently give hints or clues that might influence students' answer choices.

> ⚠️ **Read aloud all test directions for each test at the beginning of the test session. Students are allowed to ask questions after the directions are read aloud and before the signal for students to begin the test. Use this time to make sure that they completely understand the directions.**

Test Administration Tasks

Before each test session, test administrators should print the Login ID tickets. Cut them into individual tickets to hand out to students.

Login IDs are unique to each student; they do not change. Passwords are new for each test session.

> ⚠️ **For more information on student logins, refer to the _NMPED Assessments Portal User Guide 2020–2021_.**

Testing Cautions

The following situations can interfere with standardized test administration.

Coaching: Before you start a test session, make sure that all students understand what to do. A test administrator or proctor may assist a student with a procedural task; however, the student should not receive any assistance that might indicate a correct answer or a correct response. If a student asks about a test answer (for example, the student asks, "Is this right?"), give a neutral response, such as "Choose what you think is best."

Random Responses: Some students might randomly mark answers to test questions if they do not understand what to do or if they cannot read the test questions. It might be difficult to detect random responses during testing; however, if it appears that a student is not reading the test questions before choosing answers, then the responses are likely random. If this happens, the test administrator or proctor should determine what is happening and contact the test coordinator (if necessary).

Invalid Tests: In addition to random responses, other factors can contribute to a student returning invalid responses to test questions. These can include distractions, illness, or other interruptions. If the test administrator or proctor deems that a student's test responses are invalid, they should report the matter to the test coordinator in order to invalidate the test.

Incomplete Tests: If a student requires a break during a test session, they can pause and resume the session, so that the student can pick up in the test where they left off. (For more information, refer to the _Student Interface Guide_.) Remember that a section within a test must be completed within a single testing day and that students must be supervised until the section is completed. NM has test report codes that can be used to indicate if and why a student did not complete a test. Please see the _NMPED Assessments Portal User Guide_ for more information.

Test coordinators should observe and/or maintain close daily contact with all test administrators during the testing window in order to answer any questions and address any issues that might arise. Test coordinators should maintain the following records during testing:

- Students who were absent during testing

- Students who require makeup testing

- Students who did not complete all of the assessments (for example, students who transferred into or out of the school or district during the testing window)

These records will assist you when you are viewing student results.

Students can be added to classes during test administration. For more details on how to add students to classes, refer to the _NMPED Assessments Portal User Guide_.

Incidents Requiring Notification

A test session might be disrupted by unforeseen incidents (for example, fire alarms or fire drills, severe weather events, or power failures). If such an interruption occurs, supervise the students closely to make sure that they do not discuss the assessment during the interruption.

If these incidents or other individual student violations occur during testing, notify the school or district test coordinator as soon as possible.

⚠️ **For more information about how to report testing incidents or irregularities, refer to _Test Security Policies and Procedures_.**

Makeup Testing

All students should complete every test session, including makeup testing, by the end of the test administration window. Start test administration early in the testing window to allow time for makeup testing.

Test coordinators should maintain a list of absentees along with the test sessions that they missed. Plan time in the testing schedule for trained school personnel to administer makeup test sessions.

At the end of the test administration, the test coordinator should make sure that all makeup tests have been scheduled and completed.

⚠️ **Note that makeup testing is intended for students who were absent when a particular test session was administered. You may not use makeup testing to complete a test session that was started but not finished.**