

Your NJSLA-A Results: A Leader's Quick Guide

What changed, how to read the new reports, and what to do next — from Inspired Instruction

The short version. Spring 2026 was the first year of the adaptive NJSLA-A: a new test, a new scale and new cut scores. **Treat this year as a baseline.** The useful questions are not "Did we go up?" but "How do we compare with the district this year, where are students growing, and what will teachers do differently next week?"

What changed

- **The test adapts** for each student; how hard practice items felt is not a guide to scores.
- **New scale, different cut scores in every grade.** "Met Expectations" starts at 1446 in Grade 3 ELA and 1525 in Grade 8 ELA. The old NJSLA used a 650–850 scale, so scale scores can't be lined up with last year's.
- **Performance Distribution matters.** Percent Proficient = Met + Exceeded. However distribution will give you a better picture of how all students are performing and where supports should be focused.
- **What about Student Growth Percentiles?** SGPs (if available) can tell you about growth relative to NJ peers, reported as low, typical or high. While not indicating achievement, the SGP can be helpful as a part of the bigger picture.

School	School ID	Total
		Student Count Average Scale Score Performance Distribution Percent Proficient SGP Performance
State		95654 1486 40%
County		9222 1492 39%
District		2617 1457 18%
Demo School 1	0000_110	94 1457 0%

- **Proficiency and Strength taken together.** At the Standard level both the Proficient and Strength columns taken together will tell you where to prioritize your attention.

Roster	Teacher	1 Number and Operations in Base Ten						
		Achievement Category Distribution	5.NBT.A.1		5.NBT.A.2		5.NBT.A.3	
			Proficient	Strength	Proficient	Strength	Proficient	
State		 Percent Count	✓	+	×	+	×	
County		 Percent Count	×	+	×	+	×	
District		 Percent Count	×	+	×	+	×	
School		 Percent Count	×	+	×	=	×	

Read the reports in this order

1. **Compare across, not back.**
Put your school beside your district, county and state for 2026. A drop that shows up statewide tells a different story from one that is yours alone.
2. **Look at the whole distribution, not just Percent Proficient.**
Read Levels 2 (Partially Met) and 3 (Approaching) separately: Level 3 students are close to the cut score and need different support.
3. **Then the standards, and look for patterns, not single numbers.**
One standard rests on only a few questions per student. A weakness that repeats across related standards, or a whole reporting category, should be the priority.

Decoding the symbols

Where you see it	Icon	What it means
Student reports: reporting categories	! ≥ ✓	Below / Near or within / Above expectations
Standards view: "Proficient" column	✓ ◐ ✗	Group is above / within / below the proficiency standard
Standards view: "Strength" column	+ = -	Group did better / about the same / worse on this standard than on the test overall
Either column	*	Not enough information

"Not proficient, but a strength" — is that useful? Yes, once it's read correctly. The Strength icons describe a **group**, not a student, and compare a standard with the group's **own** overall score. They say nothing about proficiency. When most standards show ✗, the Proficient column can't tell a team where to start. The Strength column can: **the "-" standards are the relative gaps to prioritize first.**

Every priority needs evidence of progress before spring. Decide now what you will look at in January to know it is working.

Key dates: Individual Student Reports to families by **November 9, 2026** · results reported to your board of education by **December 8, 2026.**

From results to action

The state's guide is clear that decisions about students should draw on the whole picture, not the state test alone. Leaders set direction; teams do the work:

Level	The questions to answer
District	What grade levels and subject areas saw growth? Which ones showed a lack of progress or areas of the greatest need? What are our top two or three priorities this year? What will we tell our board by December 8?
School	What grade levels and subject areas saw growth this year? Which ones showed a lack of progress or areas of the greatest need? What will we prepare to explain students' results to parents by November 9th? What support will we give teachers?
Team / PLC	Which standards will we target in the next 4–6 weeks? Are there any curricular gaps? What instructional strategies will we embed to match the rigor of the assessment? What common check will show progress?
Student	Who needs targeted support now, especially students just below a cut score? What are the interventions that need to be put in place?

How Inspired Instruction can help

Most leadership teams face two challenges this year: understanding what the reports are really saying, and getting staff to act on them. We were founded by New Jersey administrators. We've sat in your chair.

- **Leadership Data Session** — a half day to read your reports accurately, set priorities and build a board narrative that holds up.
- **PLC Data-to-Action Cycle** — we bring a step-by-step team protocol that takes your staff from report to priority standards to a focused instructional cycle.
- **NJSLA-A Instructional Rigor Workshops** — sessions focused on embedding daily instructional strategies that support the rigor of the assessment in both ELA and math
- **Assessment Design** — turn the assessments you already use into NJSLA-A aligned assessments, in short sessions that fit PLCs or PD time.

Sources: NJDOE, NJSLA Score Interpretation Guide (prepared by Cambium Assessment, Inc., Sept. 18, 2026); NJDOE broadcasts of Sept. 9 and 16, 2026. Confirm details in your district's Centralized Reporting System. Inspired Instruction is not affiliated with NJDOE or Cambium Assessment.