



5 FACTS FOR PARENTS ABOUT STUDENT TESTING

Why Do We Test Students?

Summative assessments once a year show whether students across the state are mastering academic standards, while formative and interim assessments throughout the year tell teachers what individual students are struggling with so they can help them master those specific standards.

Assessing students is required by federal and state law. The Every Students Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires that, at a minimum, all students, including students with disabilities and English learners, be tested in:

- Reading and math in grades 3–8 and once in high school;
- Science once in elementary, middle, and high school;
- English proficiency if the student is an English learner.

What Is the Vision for Student Assessment in New Mexico?

In early 2019, the PED asked students, parents, teachers, and community members from around the state what they wanted in an assessment system. Based on that feedback, the Student Success Task Force recommended changes to the state assessment system. You can watch a short video about their work and read a brief summary of their recommendations at: <https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us>.

What Math and Reading Test will Students Take?

In grades 3–8, students will take New Mexico's Measures of Student Success and Achievement (NM-MSSA). In grade 10, students will take PSAT 10; and in grade 11, students will take the **SAT School Day with Essay**.

What Other Tests Will Students Be Required to Take?

- Students in grades 5, 8, and 11 will take the New Mexico Assessment of Science Readiness (NM-ASR).
- Students with significant cognitive disabilities will take the Dynamic Learning Maps test instead of NM-MSSA, NM-ASR, and the SAT.
- English learners will take ACCESS for ELLs to measure English proficiency.
- English learners with significant cognitive disabilities will take Alt-ACCESS instead of ACCESS.
- Students in grades K-2 will take the Istation early reading test.
- The Early Childhood Observation Tool is a tool used by teachers to see what Kindergarten and pre-K students know and can do.
- Please visit the Assessment web page to download Fact sheets for these tests at: <https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/bureaus/assessment-3/quick-communications/>

Are These Tests Required to Graduate High School?

New Mexico law requires that high school students show competency in reading, writing, math, science, and social studies to graduate (22-13-1.1 NMSA). Passing the ESSA-required assessments is one way to do this, but there are other ways for students to show readiness for graduation. Details can be found at: <https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/bureaus/college-career-readiness/graduation/>.

Additional resources

- Balanced Assessment System Quick Infographic: <https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/The-Balanced-Assessment-System-Quick-Infographic.pdf>
- Balanced Assessment System Brochure: https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/NM_BAS_4-Page-Brochure.pdf