

Information for Parents: New Jersey's State Assessments

New Jersey Department of Education

Why should students take the state assessments?

State assessments give parents and educators the information they need to determine whether students have learned what they are expected to learn for their grade or course. State assessments consistently measure what students know and are able to do regardless of where they live. When students participate in the state assessment, teachers and parents can identify whether a student is excelling and may need additional challenging or enriching lessons, or whether a student needs additional instruction or supports. Districts/schools can use assessment results to measure the effectiveness of the instructional programs provided, if all students participate.

Read more about [New Jersey's state assessments](#).

What is the State Assessment System?

New Jersey's State Assessment System includes the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM), and the Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners (ACCESS for ELLs 2.0). The PARCC assessments measure achievement in English language arts/literacy in grades 3 through 11 and mathematics in grades 3 through 8 and at the end of Algebra 1, Algebra 2 and Geometry courses. The PARCC assessments measures students' ability to apply and demonstrate knowledge of concepts rather than memorize facts. The DLM assessment is New Jersey's alternate assessment for those students who have significant intellectual disabilities. The ACCESS for ELLs measures the English proficiency of English Language Learners (ELLs) in listening, speaking, reading and writing. Many accessibility features are available to students during the assessments to enhance their ability to read and respond to test questions. Accommodations are also provided to students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and to ELLs to level the playing field by enabling access to test items.

Read more about [PARCC](#), [Dynamic Learning Maps](#), and [ACCESS for ELLs](#).

What does the school do with the test results?

Schools use the assessment results as an academic checkup to ensure that students are meeting grade-level expectations and remain on track for the next grade level and ultimately, high school graduation. Teachers can use this information to improve the curriculum, better plan instruction and provide more personalized instruction to address individual student needs. The results can help teachers identify where a student is excelling and/or where he or she needs additional support or enrichment. State assessment data can also be used to measure individual student progress over time. Districts use the assessment data to measure the effectiveness of their curriculum, interventions and programs. Test results from the PARCC assessment show how well a student performed in subcategories of skills in each subject to identify strengths and weaknesses.

Read more about the score reports for [PARCC](#), [Dynamic Learning Maps](#), and [ACCESS for ELLs](#).

What can parents do with the assessment results?

Parents can use assessment results as a springboard to start a discussion with teachers about how they can help their child stay on track and learn how they can view their child's progress over time. State assessments measure whether students have achieved what is expected for their grade or course. Parents can use their child's test results to better understand his or her needs and strengths and work with teachers to identify resources that would provide additional support. It is important to remember that state assessments are only one measure of student achievement. They should be used in conjunction with the many forms of assessment used by each child's teachers in the classroom to get a full picture of the child's achievement and progress in academic areas, as well as in other areas of need.

Read more about [understanding PARCC score reports](#).