



# 2024 Wisconsin Forward Exam Performance Level Standard Setting

## Overview

Recent revisions to Wisconsin's English language arts and mathematics [academic standards](#) meant an update was needed to the Forward Exam design to align to the academic standards. These revisions went into effect during the 2023-24 administration of the standardized assessment. Every time there are revisions to academic standards (and therefore assessment designs), a corresponding performance standard-setting process is required to update cut scores.



## Performance Level Standard Setting Process

In June 2024, a diverse group of 88 educators participated in this standard setting meeting. Using [the formal bookmark standard-setting process](#), the group recommended updated cut scores, in alignment with the updated academic standards and new ELA and mathematics Forward assessments. These updated cut scores separate students into [four performance levels](#) (*Developing, Approaching, Meeting, and Advanced*). These performance levels use language that encourages and motivates student learning, providing a snapshot of students' progress in learning grade level skills and content.

## Standard Setting Educator Demographics and Participation

- The participating educators have experience working with students with diverse backgrounds, including students with disabilities and English language learners.
- Educators represented all areas of the state, and included representatives from each of Wisconsin's 12 Cooperative Education Service Areas (CESAs), the five largest school districts, private Choice schools, and rural, suburban, and urban school districts.

- Educators included mathematics and reading specialists, classroom teachers, school principals, curriculum and instruction coordinators and specialists, interventionists, instructional coaches, gifted and advanced coordinators, and CESA staff.

## Performance Level Standard Setting Process Details

- During the performance-level standard-setting meeting, educators participated in an orientation where they learned about the standard-setting process approved by the Wisconsin Technical Advisory Committee of national assessment experts.



- The first step of the process was reviewing and discussing the academic standards for each specific content area (ELA and mathematics).
- Educators intentionally discussed expectations for students at each given performance level based on the revised academic standards. Educators considered a variety of different perspectives, while keeping in mind the given content area and grade level.
- After productive group discussions, educators individually reviewed Forward Exam test questions alongside the corresponding academic standards and made initial cut score recommendations.
- These initial recommendations were used in multiple rounds of test-question review, additional group discussion, and data review to solidify the recommendations. Each individual educator then made a final recommendation of cut scores, which was formally presented to the full educator panel for final discussion and approval. Statistical and content experts supported this work with analysis and affirmation.
- Once final recommendations were solidified by the group, the updated cut scores were presented to the state superintendent for consideration. The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, in collaboration with department staff, established final [Forward Exam cut scores](#) on June 29, 2024.

For more information about required statewide assessments, [visit the DPI's website](#).