



Establishing Performance Levels on Statewide Assessments

Student achievement on statewide assessments is typically reported by scale score and by performance level. Scale scores are the scores students earn on the test and provide information when compared to other students' scores (e.g. [percentile rank](#)) or across years. Performance levels are reported as categories linked to grade-level knowledge and skills in the state standards. Classification of student scores into performance levels provides information to educators, parents, and students about what students know and are able to do in relation to the Wisconsin Academic Standards.

For each of the statewide summative assessments, educators and assessment professionals have made recommendations to the State Superintendent to establish these [performance levels](#). The most common process for arriving at these recommendations involves a standard setting where panels of educators review the standards, performance level descriptions, and test items.

Forward Exam

Student performance on the Forward Exam is reported in terms of four performance levels: Advanced, Proficient, Basic, and Below Basic.



Mathematics and English Language Arts - Grades 3-8

[Bookmark Standard Setting](#) meeting held on June 14-17, 2016 with Wisconsin educators. The State Superintendent adopted these recommendations on June 28, 2016.

Science - Grades 4 and 8

[Bookmark Standard Setting](#) meeting held on May 29-30, 2019 with Wisconsin educators. The cut scores were adopted on June 5, 2019.

Social Studies - Grades 4, 8 and 10

[Bookmark Standard Setting](#) meeting held on May 24-26, 2022 with Wisconsin educators. The recommendations were adopted on June 6, 2022.

ACT with writing

Student performance on the ACT with writing is reported in terms of four performance levels: Advanced, Proficient, Basic, and Below Basic.



Mathematics, English Language Arts, and Science – Grade 11
A [Modified Briefing Book Standard Setting](#) Meeting was held in the summer of 2015 with Wisconsin educators. The State Superintendent adopted these recommendations on September 14, 2015.

PreACT Secure

Student performance on PreACT Secure is reported in terms of four performance levels: Advanced, Proficient, Basic, and Below Basic.

Mathematics and English Language Arts – Grades 9 and 10

Equipercentile equating to the ACT Aspire was used to identify the performance levels. The State Superintendent adopted these recommendations on July 7, 2023.

Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM)

Student performance on DLM is reported in terms of four performance levels: Advanced, At Target (Proficient), Approaching the Target (Basic), and Emerging (Below Basic).



Mathematics and English Language Arts – Grades 3-11

The [Dynamic Learning Maps Consortium Standard Setting](#) established performance levels for students from each of the member states in 2015. The State Superintendent adopted these performance levels in November of 2015, and the updated performance levels from DLM in June of 2022.

Science Grades 4, and 8-11

The [Dynamic Learning Maps Consortium Standard Setting](#) established performance levels for students from each of the member states in 2016. The State Superintendent adopted the recommendations from the Dynamic Learning Maps Consortium on August 19, 2016.

Social Studies Grades 4, 8 and 10

Wisconsin educators met in 2005 to develop the Social Studies rating form for grades 4, 8 and 10 with the recommendations being adopted prior to the fall 2005 administration.

ACCESS for ELLs

Student performance on ACCESS for ELLs is reported in terms of six performance levels: Entering, Beginning, Developing, Expanding, Bridging, and Reaching.

Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing – Grades K-12



In August of 2016, the WIDA Consortium established performance levels for students from each of the member states using a modified Bookmarking procedure for listening and reading, and a modified Body of Work procedure for speaking and writing. The State Superintendent adopted these recommendations on May 11, 2020.