

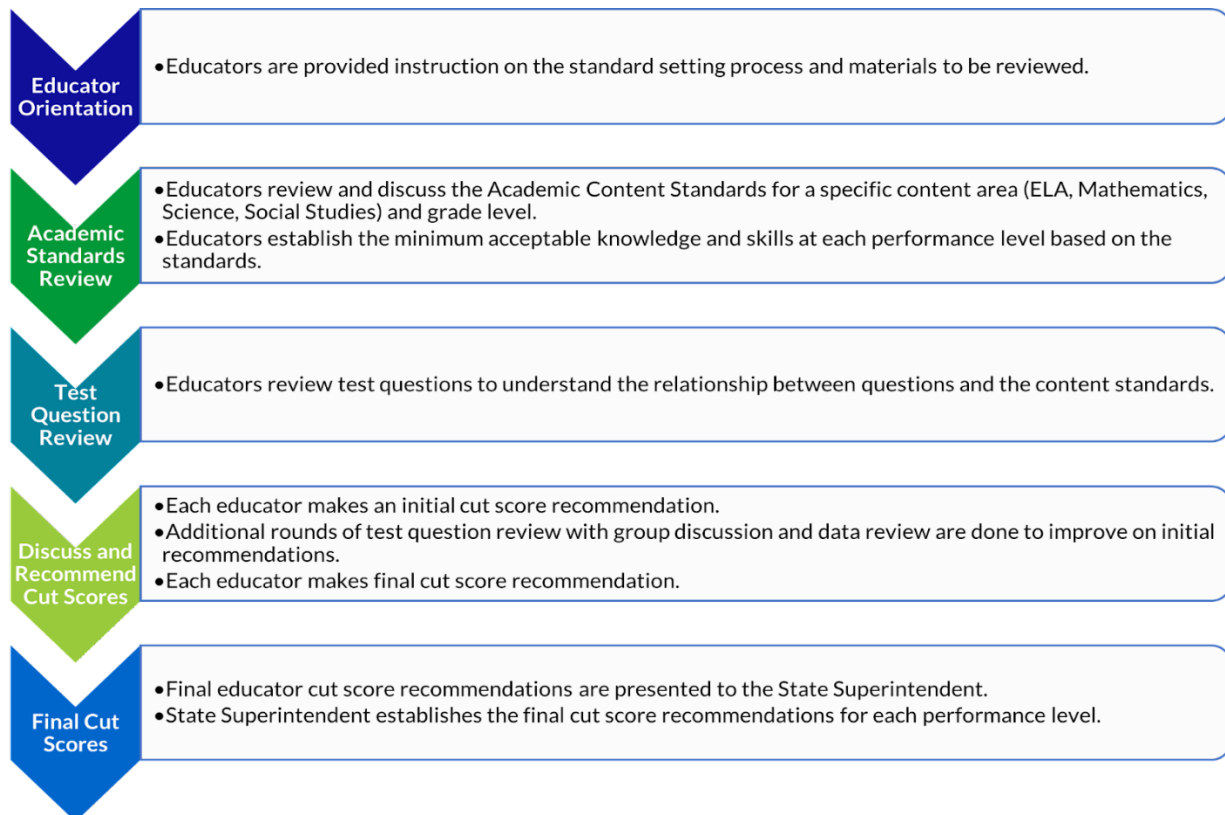


Standard Setting Process for Statewide Assessments

The primary purpose of the required statewide summative assessments is to identify what students know and can do in relation to a set of grade-level standards: the Wisconsin Academic Standards for the Forward Exam, PreACT Secure, and ACT with writing; the English Language Development Standards for ACCESS for ELLs; and the Extended Standards for Dynamic Learning Maps. Performance levels have been defined to indicate the degree to which students are meeting the grade level expectations of the standards. For the Forward Exam, the [performance levels](#) are Advanced, Proficient, Basic, and Below Basic. The minimum scores, or “cut scores”, required to meet these performance levels are established for each assessment using a variety of standard setting methods which follow the guidelines in the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (AERA, APA, & NCME, 2014).

A standard setting occurs when a statewide assessment is created, or academic standards have been revised. Standard setting is a multi-step process where a diverse panel of Wisconsin educators establish descriptions of each performance level and make recommendations for the cut scores necessary to be classified into each level.

Standard Setting Process





During a standard setting, educators participate in an orientation where they learn about the standard setting process. The initial task educators undertake is to review and discuss the academic standards for the specific content area. Educators next describe the expectations for students at each performance level based on those standards.

Depending on the content area and the grade level, educators consider a variety of different perspectives when having this discussion. For example, at the high school level, information on college readiness benchmarks that have been established are considered.

Educators then begin the process of reviewing test questions to understand the relationship between those test questions and the content standards. When this review is completed, each educator makes an initial cut score recommendation. After the initial recommendation is made, educators participate in multiple rounds of test question review, group discussion, and data review to improve upon the initial recommendations. Each educator ultimately makes a final recommendation which is presented to the entire educator panel for final discussion and approval.

These final recommendations are then presented to the State Superintendent. In consideration of the educator recommendations, as well as information provided by department staff and technical advisors, the State Superintendent establishes the final cut scores.

The statewide summative assessments provide one method of identifying student performance in relation to the academic standards. For a more complete picture, the statewide summative assessments should be used in conjunction with multiple measures such as locally administered interim and formative assessment data, classroom observations, and student grades to gauge student learning.

More information about the Forward Exam Standard Setting is available on the [Forward Exam Resources webpage](#).

References:

American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, & National Council on Measurement in Education (2014). Standards for educational and psychological testing. Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association.

Zieky, M. & Perie, M., (2006). A Primer on Setting Cut Scores on Tests of Educational Achievement. Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service.