

Setting Academic Achievement Standards for the MAP Assessment

What is Achievement Standards Setting?



This fall, the parents and teachers of every student who participated in the Mississippi Assessment Program (MAP) test will receive a **score report**. The score report presents an overview of a student's subject-level performance in English language arts and mathematics, as well as an overall score. The overall score will determine a student's **performance level**. There are five levels, with the top two indicating a strong grasp of grade-level standards and readiness for the next step in a student's education.

This summer, educators and content area experts gathered to determine what score a student must earn on the assessment in order to achieve a particular achievement standard. This process is called **academic achievement standard setting**. Achievement standards will help students, parents, teachers and policymakers understand how students are performing based on what they're learning in the classroom.

How Does the Achievement Standards Setting Process Work?

- The achievement standards setting process used for new statewide assessments involves Mississippi teachers, test content, and data to create achievement standards.
- Achievement standards setting is typically conducted after the first administration of a new assessment.
- Panelists will recommend the “cut scores” – the scores that mark the threshold of performance for each of the five levels. When the process is complete, the group provides a recommendation about “how much of the test does a student have to get correct to *pass*?” and “how much of the test does a student have to get correct to be considered *proficient*?”
- The determinations of achievement standards will then be reviewed by an expert policy advisory group and voted on by the Mississippi State Board of Education.

What are the Five Performance Levels?

The achievement standards are based on **performance level descriptors (PLDs)**. PLDs describe the specific knowledge and skills that a student at a given performance level should be able to demonstrate. How a student performed on the assessment will be shown on the score report. The five performance levels are as follows:

Minimal

A student performing below the Basic level inconsistently demonstrates the knowledge or skills that define basic level performance.

Basic

Students at the Basic level demonstrate partial mastery of the knowledge and skills in the course and may experience difficulty in the next grade or course in the content area. These students are

able to perform some of the content standards at a low level of difficulty, complexity, or fluency as specified by the grade-level content standards.

Passing

Students at the Passing level demonstrate general mastery of the knowledge and skills required for success in the grade or course in the content area. These students are able to perform approaching or at the level of difficulty, complexity, or fluency specified by the grade-level content standards.

Proficient

Students at the Proficient level demonstrate solid academic performance and mastery of the knowledge and skills required for success in the grade or course in the content area. These students are able to perform at the level of difficulty, complexity, or fluency specified by the grade-level content standards.

Advanced

Students at the Advanced level consistently perform in a manner clearly beyond that required to be successful in the grade or course in the content area. These students are able to perform at a high level of difficulty, complexity, or fluency as specified by the grade-level content standards.

When Will Score Reports be Available to Parents?

Parents will receive their students' score reports for the 2015-16 school year's assessments in the fall. Each student's score report will indicate his/her performance level. In future years, parents will receive score reports close to the end of the school year in which testing took place. (Achievement standards setting in the first year is based on results from the first test administration – hence the delay in first year results.)

What is the Mississippi Assessment Program (MAP)?

- The Mississippi Assessment Program (MAP) measures students' knowledge, skills, and academic growth from elementary through high school.
- Student progress is measured from grades 3 through 8 with annual tests in English Language Arts and Mathematics and in high school Algebra I and English II.
- MAP assessments are designed to let parents know how their child is progressing, and to give teachers more information to guide instruction. The goal of MAP is to evaluate and monitor student learning to ensure students develop the knowledge and skills they need to graduate prepared for college or careers.