

Appendix B: State definitions of proficient*

Alabama

Not available.

Alaska

Reading: A student who scores at the proficient level based on the scale scores, established in state regulation, in reading combined with writing or language arts.

Mathematics: A student who scores at the proficient level based on the scale scores established in state regulation.

Arizona

Meets Standard: This level denotes demonstration of solid academic performance on challenging subject matter reflected by the content standards. This includes knowledge of subject matter, application of such knowledge to real-world situations, and content relevant analytical skills. Attainment of at least this level is the expectation for all Arizona students

Arkansas

Proficient: Proficient students demonstrate solid academic performance for the grade tested and are well-prepared for the next level of schooling. They can use Arkansas's established reading and writing or mathematics skills and knowledge to solve problems and complete tasks on their own. Students can tie ideas together and explain the ways their ideas are connected.

California

Proficient: In reading-language arts and mathematics in grades 2-8 would be based on the percentage of students scoring at the proficient or advanced level on the California Standards Tests (CSTs). These tests assess how well students are mastering the state's rigorous academic content standards, which lay out what students should know and be able to do at each grade level.

At the high school level, the definition of "proficient" in reading and math would be tied to scores on the California High School Exit Exam, which is a pass/fail test. "Cut scores" for achieving proficiency at the high school level would be equivalent to achieving proficiency on the California standards-based tests in reading-language arts and math.

Colorado

Proficient: Students understand directions, recognize author's point of view, explain reactions, define problems or solutions, make predictions and draw conclusions, differentiate among printed materials, discriminate among various media, extract information from complex stimulus, identify character's reactions or motives, identify sequences, support opinions, classify familiar vocabulary, and interpret poetry in a concrete manner.

Connecticut

Reading: Proficient: Students who score at this level can comprehend most grade-level or

*Please visit each state's Web site for additional information.

below-grade-level textbooks and other materials. They can generally determine the main idea, have an adequate understanding of the author's purpose and are able to make some judgments about a test's quality and themes.

Mathematics: Proficient: Students who score at this level demonstrate adequately developed conceptual understanding and computational skills, and adequately developed problem-solving skills.

Delaware

Meets Standard: The performance levels for reading, writing and math at grades 3, 5, 8, and 10 and science and social studies grades 4, 6, 8 and 11 were set through a standard setting process detailed in the *Report and Recommendations to the Delaware State Board of Education for Establishing Proficiency Levels for the Delaware Student Testing Program in Reading, Writing, and Mathematics*, August 1999. The DSTP scale scores for reading and math are reported on a developmental scale ranging from 150 to 800. The determination of the DSTP scale scores for grades 3, 5, 8, and 10 has been done using a procedure that involves linking to the Stanford Achievement Test, version 9, (Stanford 9) scores for reading and math. The DSTP in reading and math contains a portion of the Stanford 9. The scaling for grades 4, 6, and 7 is parallel to that at grades 3, 5, 8, and 10. Determination of five levels of performance for reading and math at grades 4, 6, and 7 will be done using a statistical model. For writing, raw scores are used to determine performance levels at grades 3, 5, 8, and 10 and the performance levels at grades 4, 6, and 7 can easily replicate those at grades 3, 5, 8, and 10.

District of Columbia

Proficient: Percentage that scored at or above the state proficiency standard. Students who are not tested are included in this computation as being not proficient.

Florida

Level 4: Performance at this level indicates that the student has success with the challenging content of the Sunshine State Standards. A Level 4 student answers most of the questions correctly but may have only some success with questions that reflect the most challenging content.

Georgia

Meets Standard: CRCT: Scores from 300-349 indicate "Meets Standard," which represents the "Proficient" student achievement level

Hawaii

Meets Proficiency: Assessment results indicate that the student has demonstrated the knowledge and skills required to meet the content standards for this grade. The student is ready to work on higher levels of this content area.

Idaho

Proficient: Student demonstrates thorough knowledge and mastery of skills that allows him or her to function independently on all major concepts related to his or her current educational level.

Illinois

Meets Standards: Student work demonstrates proficient knowledge and skills in the subject. Students effectively apply knowledge and skills to solve problems.

Indiana

Pass: Solid academic performance for each grade assessed. Students reaching this level have demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter, including subject-matter knowledge, application of such knowledge to real-world situations, and analytical skills appropriate to the subject matter.

Iowa

Grade 4 Reading: Intermediate: Understands some factual information; sometimes can draw conclusions and make inferences about the motives and feelings of the characters; and is beginning to be able to identify the main idea, evaluate the style and structure of the text, and interpret nonliteral language.

Grade 4 Mathematics: Intermediate: Is beginning to develop an understanding of most math concepts and to develop the ability to solve complex word problems, use a variety of estimation methods, and interpret data from graphs and tables.

Grade 8 Reading: Intermediate: Understands some factual information; sometimes can draw conclusions; makes inferences about the motives and feelings of characters; and applies what has been read to new situations; and sometimes can identify the main idea, evaluate the style and structure of the text, and interpret nonliteral language.

Grade 8 Mathematics: Intermediate: Is beginning to develop an understanding of most math concepts and to develop the ability to solve complex word problems, use a variety of estimation methods, and interpret data from graphs and tables.

Grade 11 Reading: Intermediate: Understands some factual information; sometimes can make inferences about the characters; identify the main idea, and identifies author viewpoint and style; occasionally can interpret nonliteral language and judge the validity of conclusion.

Grade 11 Mathematics: Intermediate: Is beginning to develop the ability to apply a variety of math concepts and procedures, make inferences about qualitative information, and solve a variety of novel, quantitative reasoning problems.

Kansas

Proficient: Mastery of core skills is apparent. Knowledge and skills can be applied in most contexts. Ability to apply learned rules to most situations is evident. Adequate command of difficult or challenging content and applications is competently demonstrated. There is evidence of solid performance.

Kentucky

Proficient: Proficient as defined in Kentucky has been demonstrated to be a very high standard for student achievement, especially in comparison to standards typically set by other states. In Kentucky, Proficiency requires students to know content beyond basic knowledge and to apply their knowledge to solve problems. Students performing at the Proficient level are able to: * demonstrate broad content knowledge and apply it; * communicate in an accurate, clear, and organized way with relevant details and evidence; * use appropriate strategies to solve problems and make decisions; * demonstrate effective use of critical thinking skills.

Louisiana

Basic: These standards have been shown to be high; for example, equipercentile equating of the standards has shown that Louisiana's "Basic" is somewhat more rigorous than NAEP's "Basic." In addition, representatives from Louisiana's business community and higher education have validated the use of "Basic" as the state's proficiency goal

Maine

Meets the standard: The student's work demonstrates consistent accomplishment of content knowledge, analysis, problem-solving, and communication skills..

Maryland

Proficient: Achieved the cut score on the assessment, as determined by the state.

Massachusetts

Proficient: Students at this level demonstrate a solid understanding of challenging subject matter and solve a wide variety of problems

Michigan

Proficient: A realistic and rigorous level of achievement indicating proficiency in meeting the needs of students..

Minnesota

Level 3: A score at or above Level 3 (scale score 1,420-1,499) represents state expectations for achievement of all students. Students who score at Level 3 are working successfully on grade-level material. This level corresponds to a "proficient" level of achievement for *NCLB*.

Mississippi

Mississippi Curriculum Test, Proficient: Students at the proficient level demonstrate solid academic performance and mastery of the content area knowledge and skills required for

success at the next grade. Students who perform at this level are well prepared to begin work on even more challenging material that is required at the next grade.

Algebra I and English II Test, Proficient: Students at the proficient level demonstrate solid academic performance and mastery of the knowledge and skills required for success in a more advanced course in the content area.

Missouri

Communication Arts: Proficient: In reading, students compare and contrast; interpret and use textual elements; predict; draw inferences and conclusions; determine word meaning; identify synonyms and antonyms; identify main idea and details. In writing, they use some details and organization; write complete sentences; generally follow rules of standard English.

Grade 4 Mathematics: Proficient: Students communicate math processes; add and subtract common fractions and decimals (money only); use standard units of measurement; identify attributes of planes and solid figures; create and interpret data from graphs; recognize, extend, and describe pictorial or numeric patterns; apply strategies to solve multi-step and logic problems.

Grade 8 Mathematics: Proficient: Students communicate math processes; recognize transformations; solve problems using units of measurement; interpret data from multiple representations; extend and describe patterns and relationships using algebraic expressions; develop and apply number theory concepts; use inductive and deductive reasoning to solve problems.

Grade 10 Mathematics: Proficient: Students communicate math processes; usually analyze and evaluate information; estimate; recognize reasonableness; identify needed information; make predictions; find probability; identify various representations of data; represent situations algebraically; apply properties of real numbers; use multiple strategies to solve problems.

Montana

Proficient: A student demonstrates competency including subject matter knowledge, the application of subject knowledge to real world situations, and the analytical skills appropriate to this subject.

Nebraska

Proficient: In the STARS (School-based Teacher-led Assessment and Reporting System) assessment system, student performance achievement levels are determined for each classroom assessment according to criteria established under the quality indicators. This process must be conducted in a technically appropriate manner and is reviewed by the external assessment reviewers.

Nevada

Not available.

New Hampshire

Grade 3 Reading or Language Arts: Proficient: Students at this level demonstrate an overall understanding of the materials they read, hear, and view. They are able to identify main ideas and draw conclusions. Their responses show thought and are supported with some detail. When writing, they communicate competently and are able to adequately develop and support their ideas. Although they demonstrate a firm grounding in the mechanics of written expression, they may make errors in spelling and grammar. However, these do not interfere with a reader's ability to understand the text.

Grade 3 Mathematics: Proficient: Students at this level are able to estimate and compute solutions to problems and communicate their understanding of mathematics. They can, with reasonable accuracy, add three-digit whole numbers; subtract any two-digit numbers; and multiply whole numbers up to five. They are able to: Demonstrate and understanding of place value as well as the relationship between simple fractions and decimals; read charts and graphs; make measurements; and recognize and extend patterns.

Grade 6 Reading or Language Arts: Proficient: Students at this level demonstrate an overall understanding of literacy, narrative, factual, informational, and practical works. They extract main ideas, analyze text, evaluate and organize information, draw conclusions, and make inferences and interpretations. They critically evaluate materials they read, hear, and view. They effectively organize, develop, and support ideas so that a reader can easily understand the intent of their writing. They demonstrate a firm grounding in the mechanics of written expression; however, they may still make some errors.

Grade 6 Mathematics: Proficient: Students at this level demonstrate an overall understanding of mathematical concepts and skills. They make few, if any, errors in computation. They use tables and graphs to organize, present, and interpret data. They employ appropriate strategies to solve a wide range of problems. They clearly communicate their solutions and problem-solving strategies.

Grade 10 Reading or Language Arts: Proficient: Students at this level demonstrate a solid understanding of a wide range of literary, narrative, factual, informational, and practical works. They make meaningful connections between and among ideas and concepts in materials they read, hear, and view. They evaluate and organize information, make and communicate informed judgments, and provide evidence for inferences and interpretations. Their writing is clear, logical, and shows evidence of fluency and style. They effectively control the mechanics of language including spelling, capitalization, grammar, and punctuation.

Grade 10 Mathematics: Proficient: Students at this level demonstrate a solid understanding of mathematical concepts and skills. Their work displays a high degree of accuracy. They make meaningful connections among important concepts in algebra, geometry, measure-

ment, and probability and statistics. They identify and use appropriate information to solve problems. They provide supporting evidence for inferences and solutions. They communicate mathematical ideas effectively, with sufficient substance and detail to convey understanding.

New Jersey

Proficient: Proficient means a score achieved by a student at or above the cut score which demarks a solid understanding of the math content measured by an individual section on any state assessment

New Mexico

Not available.

New York

Proficiency: The state has defined proficiency as the performance of a student who scores Level 3 on the grade 4 or 8 English language arts assessment, shows Level 3 growth on the NYSESLAT, scores between 65 and 84 on a Regents examination, or passes an approved alternative to a Regents examination

North Carolina

Level III: Students performing at this level consistently demonstrate mastery of grade level subject matter and course subject matter and skills and are well prepared for the next grade or course level work.

North Dakota

Proficient: The definition of proficiency was established in narrative form by the state content and achievement standards drafting committees in 1999. These narratives guided the state standards-setting committees who established the state's achievement cut-scores for the North Dakota State Assessment in 2001-02. The standards-setting committees drafted supporting narrative that aligned to the final cut-scores and became the operative definition for all reports.

Ohio

Not available.

Oklahoma

Not available.

Oregon

Meets Standard: Specific cut score on state multiple-choice math test plus specific cut score (composite of five trait scores) on math problem solving assessment.

Pennsylvania

Proficient: Satisfactory academic performance. Proficient work indicates a solid understanding and adequate display of the skills included in the Pennsylvania Academic Content Standards.

Puerto Rico

Not available.

Rhode Island

Achieved Standard: Students demonstrate the ability to apply concepts and processes effectively and accurately. Students communicate ideas in clear and effective ways.

South Carolina

Proficient: Proficient: A student who performs at the proficient level on the PACT has met expectations for student performance based on the curriculum standards approved by the state board of education. The student is well prepared for work at the next grade. The proficient level represents the long-term goal for student performance in South Carolina.

South Dakota

Not available.

Tennessee

Proficient: Student performs at or above the cut scores set by the state.

Texas

Met the Standard: Student performed at a level that was at or somewhat above the state passing standard. Performance showed a sufficient understanding of the knowledge and skills tested at grade level.

Utah

Sufficient: A student scoring at this level is proficient on the measured standards and objectives of the Core Curriculum in this subject. The student's performance indicates sufficient understanding and application of key curriculum concepts

Vermont

Meets Standard: English or Language Arts:

- (1) Reading: Basic Understanding: Students must demonstrate the ability to comprehend a variety of materials of varying length and complexity.
- (2) Reading: Analysis and Interpretation: Students must demonstrate the ability to analyze and interpret what they read in the process of becoming critical readers.
- (3) Writing Effectiveness: Students must demonstrate the ability to write effectively in a variety of formats for a variety of purposes, audiences, and contexts.
- (4) Writing Conventions: Students must demonstrate control of the conventions (usage, spelling and punctuation) of the English language according to current standards of correctness.

Meets Standards: Mathematics:

- (1) Concepts: Showing that the student understands mathematical processes and ideas.
- (2) Skills: Showing that the student can perform the mathematical routine or technique correctly.

(3) Problem Solving: Showing that the student can choose and apply appropriate skills and concepts, and reason mathematically. Students solve increasingly complex situations by formulating, implementing and drawing conclusions from the problem solution.

Virginia

Pass/Proficient: Students who attain a scaled score of 399 or below on any of the Standards of Learning tests receive a rating of "fails/does not meet the standards." Those with a scaled score of 400 to 499 receive a rating of "pass/proficient", and those with a scaled score of 500 to 600 receive a rating of "pass/advanced."

Washington

Meet the Standard: Students performing at this level demonstrate mastery of the Essential Academic Learning Requirements for the subject and grade level.

West Virginia

Mastery: Student demonstrates knowledge, comprehension, and application of skills, which meet the standard.

Wisconsin

Proficient: Demonstrates competency in the academic knowledge and skills tested

Wyoming

Students at the proficient level use concepts and skills to acquire, analyze, and communicate information and ideas.