

State Testing in Washington

Federal law requires yearly testing of students in grades 3–8 and once in high school in English language arts (ELA) and math, and in grades 5 and 8 and once in high school in science. Washington state requires students to pass specific tests to be eligible to graduate from high school.

Most students in grades 3–8 will take the **Smarter Balanced Assessments** in ELA and math, and the **Washington Comprehensive Assessment of Science (WCAS)** in grades 5 and 8. These tests may be taken with or without tools, supports, or accommodations.

Some students with significant cognitive disabilities may take the state alternate assessment, the **Washington Access to Instruction & Measurement (WA-AIM)** in ELA, math, and science if documented in the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP).

State testing should *never* be the sole judge of a student's academic skills and knowledge. If you have questions about your child's learning, please contact your child's teacher or school.

Students learning to speak English in grades K–12 will take the **English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21st Century (ELPA21)**. This assessment measures English language skills and annual growth in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Students who receive a proficiency level of Emerging or Progressing on ELPA21 qualify to receive English language program support services.

Tests by Grade Level for 2018–19

	K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th
ELA				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Math				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Science						✓			✓

Notes:

- The ELPA21 is necessary for students learning to speak English. Students test to qualify to receive support. They continue to test annually until they reach English language proficiency.
- Other tests are required, but districts have some flexibility in choosing the tests and in deciding when students take them. The tests include second grade reading and OSPI-developed assessments in social studies, the arts, health, physical education, and educational technology. More information can be found in the subject area links on the [OSPI Assessment](http://www.k12.wa.us/assessment/default.aspx) web site: <http://www.k12.wa.us/assessment/default.aspx>.
- School districts also may require additional tests. Check with your local district for more details.

Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
Old Capitol Building
P.O. Box 47200
Olympia, WA 98504-7200

State Testing FAQ

Why does my child need to take state tests?

State testing is required by state and federal laws. It isn't the only way to find out how a student is doing in school, but it might help identify learning issues sooner rather than later.

In high school, passing state tests or approved alternatives shows students have a solid foundation of academic skills, no matter where they went to school or what they choose to do after they graduate.

May I view my child's test?

For test security reasons, students may not discuss the content of state tests with their friends and family. However, families are welcome to review their child's tests after they are scored.

State Testing Windows

Testing is scheduled within the windows listed below. Contact your local school district to find out which dates your child will be testing.

STATE TESTING WINDOWS

Oct 15–Apr 5: WA-AIM

Jan 28–Mar 22: ELPA21

Mar 4–Jun 7: Smarter Balanced

OSPI provides score reports for all tests listed above. Contact your local school district for more information.

What Does a State Test Score Mean?

- Level 4 Exceeds Achievement Standard:**
Demonstrates advanced progress toward mastery of the knowledge and skills in a subject.
- Level 3 Meets Achievement Standard:**
Demonstrates progress toward mastery of the knowledge and skills in a subject.
- Level 2 Nearly Meets Achievement Standard:**
May require further development to demonstrate the knowledge and skills in a subject.
- Level 1 Does Not Meet Achievement Standard:**
Needs substantial improvement to demonstrate the knowledge and skills in a subject.

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