

Date: November 17, 2021

Prepared by: Williams

Witness: Gwen Perea Warniment, Ph.D., Deputy Secretary of Teaching, Learning and Assessment, PED; Lynn Vazquez, Director of Assessment and Learning Management Systems, PED; Jacqueline Costales, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, PED

Assessments: Types and Applications

- Assessments vary greatly in their format, scope, and purpose and this variability can cause misunderstanding for stakeholders. To make informed decisions about assessments that can drive student growth at the classroom, school, district, and state level, it is imperative to understand the kinds of assessments that are used in kindergarten through 12th grade.

	Definition	Examples	Who Uses Them	Questions That Can Be Answered	Application
Formative Assessments	Typically these are teacher-created materials that provide immediate, actionable feedback and results that inform instruction.	Tests, quizzes, entry and exit tickets, student self-evaluations, interviews, checks for understanding	<p>Educators: to see if students are mastering content; to adjust instruction to meet individual needs; to evaluate own teaching effectiveness</p> <p>Students: to check their own learning and adjust accordingly</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did everyone understand the lesson today? Has Alonzo's understanding of long multiplication improved over the last 2 months? 	<p>DO:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide immediate, actionable, student-led insights Guide classroom instruction Help educators refine teaching <p>DON'T:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measure student knowledge against formal standards Provide comparable performance data across schools
	Definition	Examples	Who Uses Them	Questions That Can Be Answered	Application
Interim Assessments	Also called benchmark assessments, these measure student learning at certain intervals throughout the year to track progress toward goals or standards. Most often, these are administered by schools or districts that contract with test vendors. Some are computer adaptive (tailoring questions based on current skill level of student). Some charter schools and school networks create their own.	The Northwest Education Association Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) exam; Curriculum Associates i-Ready exam; Renaissance STAR exam	<p>Educators: to evaluate student progress and identify particular areas of student strength and weakness</p> <p>Students and Families: to see where they stand relative to larger learning goals and grade level</p> <p>Leaders and Policymakers: to compare progress and growth across schools, guide teaching strategies, evaluate lesson programming</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Which students in this classroom are reading on grade level? Are students in this district on track to meet state standards for math? Which subjects and skills require additional attention next quarter to ensure students continue making progress toward their grade-level standards? While Carla's not on grade level, what is her growth projection in reading? 	<p>DO:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide detailed academic and growth data of students, especially compared to standards and over time Guide classroom instruction and differentiation Enable leaders to make decisions about where to direct resources and programs <p>DON'T:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measure all subjects Allow state leaders to compare data across schools and districts if test vendors and interim assessments are chosen at the local level Measure state-specific standards if they are broadly-used across multiple states

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Summative Assessments	<p>These are any assessment given at the end of instruction, including end-of-course and Advanced Placement exams.</p> <p>However, they are most commonly associated with annual statewide assessments that measure state standards. Some states administer a common vendor-created test, while others create their own through test vendors. Some are computer adaptive and others ask all test takers to answer the same questions.</p>	<p>End of course: End-of-term or midterm exams; final project or portfolio; end-of-unit tests; AP exam</p> <p>Statewide: Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers PARCC; Smarter Balanced Assessment; New Mexico Measures of Student Success and Achievement (MSSA)</p>	<p>Educators: to see if students met grade-level standards</p> <p>District and state leaders: sometimes for grade promotion, graduation requirements or teacher evaluation systems</p> <p>Policymakers and state leaders: use proficiency data to compare outcomes across schools and districts and to aggregate data by various student populations</p> <p>State leaders: report data to federal government to receive funds</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How many students are proficient in math? How are certain student groups performing compared to the state average and other subgroups? Is the state serving some students well and not others? Where are the areas of improvement and focus on a state level? 	<p>DO:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide insight into student proficiency of state-level standards for individual students and groups of students If consistent over time, allow states to evaluate year-to-year progress and growth Enable leaders to compare data across schools and districts and between groups of students to direct resources and support where most needed Can inform state-, district-, and school-level decision-making <p>DON'T:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide real-time data to inform instruction Produce data about specific skills Show student growth if test is not consistent year-to-year

- The National Assessment of Educational Progress ([NAEP](#)) is another assessment, often called The Nation's Report Card. It is congressionally mandated and is the only assessment that measures what students know and can do in various subjects across the nation and states. Therefore, NAEP scores are used to compare educational achievement and progress between states.
- There are additional tools that states and school districts use to measure, observe, and screen for certain developmental benchmarks, learning differences, language proficiency, and more.

Assessments in New Mexico

- The state has a wide range of assessments that it utilizes to measure academic performance, grade level proficiency, and college and career readiness. The Public Education Department (PED) currently uses a [balanced system of assessments](#) whereby it requires some statewide interim and summative assessments and allows for local districts and charter schools to administer formative and interim assessments of their choosing.
- Most attention is given to the summative, statewide assessments that are [statutorily](#) required to assess math and reading proficiency in grades three through eight, and in grade 11. These assessments are used as key measures of student academic success and allow comparison of data across schools and districts. Ideally, data from summative statewide assessments can show student growth and comparisons over time, yet only when the assessment is consistent.

- In the past 10 years, the state administered three different summative assessments: The New Mexico Standards Based Assessment (NMSBA), the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), and most recently the Transition Assessment for Math and English Language Arts (TAMELA). This year, students will take a new assessment called the New Mexico Measures of Student Success and Achievement (NM-MSSA). See **Attachment 1: MSSA Fact Sheet**.
- In a recent LFC education hearing in October 2021, PED Secretary Designate Kurt Steinhaus, shared his perspective that the state move away from a single, end-of-year summative assessment to a statewide interim assessment given three times a year so as to provide real-time data to students, parents, teachers, and legislators.
 - As math and reading scores are key measures of student academic success, statewide interim assessments have the potential to offer stakeholders a broader picture of student performance. Interim data drives instruction and could allow stakeholders growth data over a school year. If a consistent, statewide interim assessment was implemented, the Legislature, PED, the public, teachers, parents, and students could receive regular information throughout the school year on student academic performance.
 - Currently, PED utilizes the Interim Measures of Student Success Achievement (iMSSA), aligned to the state summative assessment—NM-MSSA—that is available to schools as an optional state provided interim assessment for math and reading in grades three through eight.

2021-2022 Fact Sheet

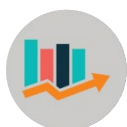
New Mexico Measures of Student Success & Achievement

The New Mexico Measures of Student Success and Achievement (NM-MSSA) is the summative assessment in Mathematics and English Language Arts (ELA). The NM-MSSA is available for Spanish Language Arts (SLA) for qualifying students. The NM-MSSA is aligned to the [New Mexico Common Core State](#)



Who takes the NM-MSSA in 2021-2022?

Students in grades 3-8 will take the NM-MSSA, except for those students who take the alternate assessment based upon an IEP.



What does the test measure?

The NM-MSSA is intended to provide evidence to determine a student's grade level proficiency and progress toward college and/or career readiness. NM-MSSA items are aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). For math, either items will be machine-scored or constructed response, while ELA items are based on passages composed of literary and informational texts. NM-MSSA test specifications and blueprints are on the Assessment Bureau webpage.



When is the test given?

The administration window for the NM-MSSA is March 28 – May 6, 2022. Access the [Online Interactive Calendar](#) for all assessment administration and training dates.



How is the test administered?

The test will be computer-based, and paper-based tests will be made available by request. The assessment will be available in English and Spanish and will include accessibility features and accommodations to support diverse student needs. The NM-MSSA is NOT a timed test; unit times on blueprints are estimates to assist schools plan testing schedules.



What are the performance levels?

1	2	3	4
Novice	Nearing Proficiency	Proficient	Advanced



Where can I access reports?

Educators can access reports through the [eMetric platform](#), and families can access reports using the [Parent Portal](#).

Visit the Assessment Bureau website for more [NM-MSSA resources](#) or [other assessment information](#).