

March 2017

Dear Parent(s) or Guardian(s):

The West Virginia Department of Education will administer the West Virginia General Summative Assessment in spring 2017 in the areas of English language arts (ELA), mathematics and science. This untimed test, which will be administered online, is used to measure academic progress for students and schools in West Virginia.

All public school students enrolled in the grades identified in this letter will participate in the West Virginia General Summative Assessment at the grade level in which they are enrolled, unless they meet the criteria for participation in the West Virginia Alternate Summative Assessment. Students in grades 3-8 and grade 11 will be assessed in ELA and mathematics, with students in grades 5, 8 and 10 being assessed in science. Please note that although students in grades 9 and 10 will not be tested in ELA and math, grade 10 students must still take the science test.

The ELA and math tests are each composed of a Computer Adaptive Test (CAT) and a Performance Task (PT), and the science test is composed of multiple sessions.

A CAT is based on student responses. The computer program adjusts the difficulty of questions throughout the assessment. For example, a student who answers items correctly will receive more challenging items, while incorrect answers generate less difficulty items. A PT is an extended activity used to better measure capacities such as depth of understanding, research skills, and complex analysis, which cannot be adequately assessed with traditional style questions. A student must answer questions on both the CAT and PT to receive a score.

The results of the test provide information about a student's academic strengths and areas that need improvement. An Individual Student Report for each student will be sent to parents/guardians.

I respectfully request that you encourage your child to perform to his/her best ability during the West Virginia General Summative Assessment this spring. It is important to note that thanks to a revised higher education policy, students who score a Level 3 or above on the Grade 11 ELA and mathematics assessments will be exempt from placement in non-credit bearing developmental education courses in West Virginia public higher education institutions.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact the principal or counselor at your child's school or the district test coordinator at your district's central office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steven L. Paine". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Steven L. Paine, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Schools

SLP/VR:mm

West Virginia General Summative Assessment An Informational Guide for Parents/Guardians

This informational guide provides additional information regarding the West Virginia General Summative Assessment, including a break-down of each content area test. To review items similar to those students may see on the assessment, we encourage you to visit <http://wv.portal.airast.org/training-tests>.

Mathematics Test

Grades 3 – 8 and Grade 11 Participate

Computer Adaptive Test

- Multiple-Choice Items
- Computer-Enabled Items

Performance Task

The Mathematics Performance Task provides an opportunity for students to demonstrate their ability to apply their content knowledge and higher-order thinking skills to answer a group of related questions dealing with a complex, real-world scenario.

Grade level assessment targets are shown below:

Grades 3 – 5

Concepts/Procedures

- Numbers and Operations in Base Ten
- Numbers and Operations – Fractions
- Operations and Algebraic Thinking
- Geometry
- Measurement and Data

Problem Solving/Modeling

Communicating Reasoning

Grades 6 – 8

Concepts/Procedures

- Ratios and Proportional Relationships (6 & 7)
- The Number System
- Expressions and Equations
- Functions (8)
- Geometry
- Statistics and Probability

Problem Solving/Modeling

Communicating Reasoning

Grade 11

Concepts/Procedures

- Numbers and Quantity
- Algebra
- Functions
- Geometry
- Statistics and Probability

Problem Solving/Modeling

Communicating Reasoning

English Language Arts (ELA) Test

Grades 3-8 and Grade 11 Participate

Computer Adaptive Test

- Multiple-Choice Items
- Computer-Enabled Items

Performance Task

The ELA Performance Task consists of two parts. During Part 1, students are presented research sources that they use to answer an initial set of questions. During Part 2 of the ELA Performance Task, students are presented the same sources as in Part 1 and are given a writing prompt. Students must use the sources, along with their notes and responses from Part 1, to write a fully developed essay using evidence from the sources.

Grade level assessment targets are shown below:

Grades 3-8 and Grade 11

- Reading
- Writing
- Speaking and Listening
- Research

Science Test

Grades 5, 8 & 10 Participate

Fixed Form Test

- Multiple-Choice Items
- Computer-Enabled Items
- Embedded Field Test Items

Grade level assessment concepts are shown below:

Grades 5 & 8

- Nature of Science
- Content of Science
- Application of Science

Grade 10

- Nature and Application of Science
- Content of Science