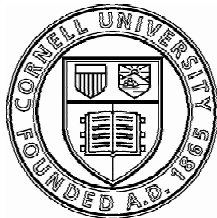




Parent Guide:

Understanding New York State Assessments



Cornell University
Cooperative Extension
Jefferson County

New York State Parental Information & Resource Center
Families and Communities Together with Schools
(315) 788-8450

www.nyspirc.org

NCLB and New York State

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 is a federal law to improve education for all children.

All public schools in the United States must follow NCLB Guidelines.

The goal of NCLB is to have every student on grade level by 2014.

In order to show progress toward this goal, New York State has:

- Written learning standards for all subject areas.
- Created a standardized testing system to test if students are meeting the learning standards.
- Developed a system of reporting the test results.



NCLB was created to help all children find success in school.

Learning Standards

The **New York State Learning Standards** show what students should know, understand, and be able to do when they finish school.

The learning standards help teachers plan what to teach.

The **Performance Indicators** give a specific description of what is expected of students at the elementary, middle school, and high school levels in order for them to stay on track to meet the learning standards for graduation.

The Learning Standards cover the following subject areas:

- Health, physical education, and family and consumer science
- Mathematics, science, and technology
- English language arts
- Languages other than English
- The Arts
- Career development and occupational studies
- Social studies



To view the New York State Learning Standards and Performance Indicators, visit the New York State Department of Education website at <http://usny.nysed.gov/parents/nyslearningstandards.html>.

Standardized Testing

In order to make sure that students are meeting the performance indicators and the state standards, they are given standardized tests in elementary, middle, and high school.

Standardized tests are developed by experts and must be given to students at the same time in the same way.

They are tests that measure what a student knows at a certain grade level based on the New York State Learning Standards.

One test cannot give you the full picture of what your child can and cannot do. They cannot measure how creative or hard working your child is. To fully understand how well your child is meeting the standards it is important to look at many different things.

- Standardized state tests
- Classroom tests
- Homework
- Writing assignments

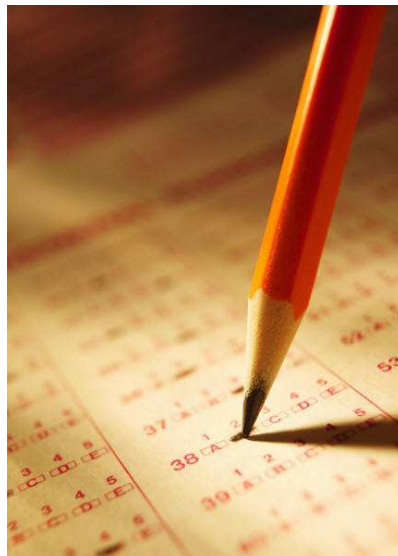


Samples of the tests can be found on the New York State Department of Education website at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/osa/>.

Many things can affect test scores. No single test can measure all that your child knows. If he is tired, hungry, or not feeling well on test day, he may not do as well on the test.

What tests are given?

- English Language Arts (ELA) is given in grades 3 through 8 in January.
- Mathematics is given in grades 3 through 8 in March.
- Science is given in grades 4 and 8 in April/May.
- Social studies is given in grades 5 and 8 in November.
- High school students take regents exams in January and June. There are regents tests in every subject taken at different grade levels.



Ask your child's school when specific test dates are.

Reporting Results

The results of New York State's standardized tests are given through **School Report Cards** and **Individual Student Score Reports**.



Information on how well students did on the state tests can help school districts make important decisions about spending, programs offered in the school, academic intervention services (AIS) for students, teacher training, and school employees.

School Report Cards

The school's report card shows how well the school and school district did in meeting New York State's academic achievement goals.

The school report card will tell you:

- How your child's school is doing compared to other schools.
- How groups of students did on the standardized tests.
- If the school is meeting state academic achievement goals, or if it is in need of improvement.
- How many students finished high school and how many dropped out.
- How many teachers are highly qualified and certified to teach what they are teaching.

Ask the school for a copy or view your local school's report card on the New York State Department of Education's website at <https://www.nystart.gov/publicweb/>.

Individual Student Score Reports

These reports, called Parent Reports, will tell you how your child did overall on the tests, as well as how he did on each section of the test.

The Individual Student Score Reports will let you know what specific areas your child is doing well in and meeting the standards, as well as what areas your child needs to work on.



What can be done with the results?

School leaders can:

- Identify staff training needs for teachers.
- Plan for support services needed for students.

Teachers can:

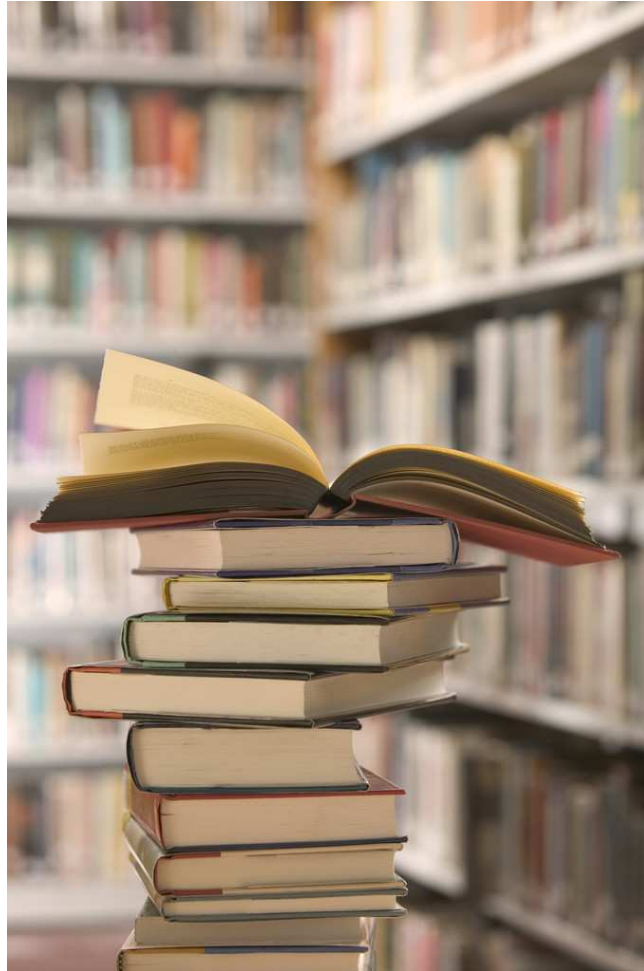
- Review what they teach to be sure that it is in line with the standards.
- Identify students who are at risk of not meeting the standards.

Parents can:

- Work with the school to make sure their children get the academic intervention services they need.
- Work with their children at home to make sure they are getting practice in the areas of need.

Resources

This guide was created with information from the New York State Education Department, www.nysed.gov.



New York State PIRC

What is a PIRC?

Parental Information and Resource Centers (PIRC) are funded by the U.S. Department of Education and are located in every state.

PIRC programs help meet the academic needs of children by helping to implement parental involvement policies, programs, and activities that:

- strengthen partnerships between parents and schools.
- improve student academic achievement.
- help parents understand No Child Left Behind.

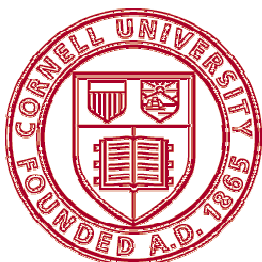
There are two PIRC programs in New York State. For more information, contact:

| | |
|---|---|
| Families and Communities Together with Schools (FACTS) , sponsored by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Jefferson County 315-788-8450 | Every Person Influences Children (EPIC) 716-332-4100 |
| Visit the New York State PIRC website at www.nyspirc.org | |

Notes

Notes

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