

Frequently Asked Questions about PEAKS Results



Q. What is PEAKS?

A. PEAKS is Alaska's statewide summative assessment administered to students in grades 3-9. The content area assessments provide students the opportunity to show their understanding of Alaska's English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics Standards at their grade levels. As a summative assessment, PEAKS provides a snapshot of student, school, district, and state progress at the end of the school year.

Q. Why is PEAKS important?

A. PEAKS is important because results provide:

- information to parents, educators, policy makers, communities, and businesses about how Alaska's schools and districts are performing,
- data to help schools improve, and
- information so that Alaska can ensure equity in education for every student.

Q. How are PEAKS scores reported?

A. Student performance is represented by the overall scale score. The scale range, from 400 to 600, is represented as a line divided into four levels of achievement: advanced, proficient, below proficient, and far below proficient. A student who earns a scale score of at least 500 is meeting the standards at a proficient level or higher.

Q. What can educators learn from the PEAKS results?

A. Educators will have access to a variety of reports with individual, grade, school, and district specific data. Statewide summative assessment results at the grade, school, and district levels provide information about how the educational system is performing for all students. This information may be used to help inform local decision makers about changes needed to instructional programs, additional student support, and professional learning for teachers.

Q. How is PEAKS an indicator of student learning?

A. PEAKS is an end-of-year assessment that provides an overall picture of an individual student's performance on the grade-level standards. It provides relative information about how an individual student performed on groups of skills and abilities measured by the reporting categories. While it gives parents and educators an objective check once a year to see how well students are meeting the standards in their grade level, it is not the only indicator of student learning. PEAKS scores should be used in conjunction with other measures of student learning such as classroom work, grades, and other formative and interim assessments.

Q. Can PEAKS results be used to show growth?

A. Yes. The first administration of PEAKS in 2017 provided results as a new baseline to for future growth in Alaska's accountability system. This system was developed for Alaska's state plan for the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).



Q. What is a ‘Reporting Category’?

A. Alaska’s standards define what students should know and be able to do. The standards are broken down into groups of similar standards. PEAKS items assess student skills on the reporting categories that correspond to a group of standards. Symbols on the reports show whether the student performed better than, about the same as, or not as well as the minimum proficient level on each reporting category.

Q. Who can access PEAKS results?

A. State, district, and school level results are available to the public on DEED’s Assessment Results webpage. Annual results are available early fall following each spring administration of the assessments.

Q. What resources are available to explain more about PEAKS results?

Q. A Parent Guide to Student Reports is available for parents on the PEAKS webpage. Additionally, An Educator Guide to Assessment Reports is available for districts and schools.

For more information on the PEAKS assessments, visit the [PEAKS webpage](#).

