

One-fifth of Alaskans who want to enter the military can't pass the written exam in English and math.

procedures with precision; solve a range of complex problems; and analyze complex real-world situations and use math models to solve problems.

Why did Alaska raise its standards?

We realized that many students who were proficient in our former standards were not prepared academically for jobs, career training, the military, and education after high school.

Alaska does not compare well with other states on national tests in reading and math. Our graduates will compete for jobs against people from around the United States and, in some cases, the world. For our students' sake, we have to take a hard look at whether we are meeting this challenge.

The University of Alaska requires half of its incoming freshmen to take remedial (high school-level) courses in English and/or math.



Did you know?

Alaska never gives data about individual students to the federal government or sells such data to companies. The AMP tests do not collect data about families' religion, politics, income, or anything of a personal nature.

Alaska has eliminated six standardized tests (and three other tests next school year) and reduced two English tests to one test. Nationwide, students take an average of 113 standardized tests between pre-kindergarten and 12th grade. The State of Alaska generally requires 19 standardized tests in a student's school career. All of these tests are given between grades 3 and 10. We do not give standardized tests to very young children.

See the Parent Guides and Tips

<http://education.alaska.gov/akparentscommunity/>



Learn more about AMP

<http://education.alaska.gov/akassessments/>



AMP

ALASKA MEASURES OF PROGRESS

A Parent Guide to AMP's First Results



INTRODUCTION

Last spring, students in grades 3 to 10 took the Alaska Measures of Progress (AMP) for the first time. AMP is the state's challenging assessment of rigorous standards for English and math. Standards are expectations for what students should know and be able to do.

This October, families will receive their first reports on how their students performed on AMP. Your school can help you understand the report. Regardless of your students' scores, the only consequence is they will receive support to improve their learning.

Students' scores on AMP placed them in one of four achievement categories: Level 1, 2, 3, or 4, from low to high, as defined by Alaska educators. Levels 3 and 4 represent meeting the standards. Levels 1 and 2 represent partially meeting the standards, not failure.



You need to know

Many students who scored proficient on Alaska's former tests did not meet the standards in AMP. That's because the new standards are higher and the tests are more difficult. It's like a baseball player hitting .300 in the minor leagues one year and .240 in the major leagues the following year. The player hasn't declined in skill, but he's in a more rigorous league.

Under AMP, students aren't suddenly less skilled and teachers aren't less capable than be-

fore. But they are being asked to meet higher expectations. Over time, as students and teachers work with the new standards, AMP scores should rise. This has happened in other states that have adopted higher standards and assessments.

- **AMP does not score students based on how other students perform.** AMP is not scored on a bell curve, in which most students are in the middle and a few are above and below that. AMP scores students based on how well they meet the standards. Any number of students could score well enough to meet the standards.

Almost two-thirds of job openings in Alaska require education or training after high school. Nearly half of the jobs require an associate degree or higher. But only a third of Alaskans age 25–34 hold a two-year or four-year degree.



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Don't be discouraged

If your student is not yet meeting the standards, don't be discouraged. Students have time to improve. This year's test results are a baseline for future growth.

- **AMP is not a pass/fail test.** There is no passing score or failing score. Students in Level 1 and 2 have not failed the test any more than a student with a C grade has failed a course.
- **AMP is not a high-stakes test for students.** Test scores do not affect grades, graduation, or

What makes the AMP tests difficult?

On the AMP tests, students answer fewer multiple-choice questions. In some questions, students must analyze the question, perform multi-step tasks, solve problems, and apply what they know to new situations. In short, AMP does more to measure higher-order thinking.

AMP's reading questions require students to read and understand literary or informational texts, identify central ideas, decide what words mean, and use evidence from the text to support their conclusions. Questions about writing require students to edit and revise texts by putting sentences into logical order, correcting errors in the choice of words, and correcting grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

AMP's math tests require students to explain and apply math concepts and carry out math