

NEW MEXICO ALTERNATE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT (NMAPA)

Frequently Asked Questions for Families

1. What is the NMAPA?

NMAPA assessment is an assessment given to students with significant cognitive disabilities to maximize access to the general education, ensure that all students with disabilities are included in New Mexico's assessment and accountability programs, and inform instruction in the classroom by providing important educational expectations and data. NMAPA measures the performance of students with significant cognitive disabilities against the New Mexico Common core Extended Grade Band Expectations (CC-EGBEs) in English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics and against the New Mexico Expanded Grade Band Expectations (EGBEs) in science and social students.

2. Why should students with significant cognitive disabilities participate in academic instruction and assessment?

NMAPA is designed to meet the requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). These laws mandate that all students participate in assessments that measure student achievement on grade-level content standards. This test was designed to assist educators, parents, and related service providers with determining the level of academic skill the students have attained up to the point of assessment.

3. Should my child take the alternate assessment?

Decisions concerning a student's participation in statewide and district-wide tests are made at least annually by each student's IEP team. The state of New Mexico provides IEP teams with criteria for participation in the NMAPA, which can be found on the New Mexico Assessment Portal (<http://nmapa-portal.org>) on the Resources page.

4. When and how will the NMAPA be administered?

Schools have a four week window to administer the NMAPA. The window opens in March and ends in April. This window was chosen to provide ample time to test all eligible students at each student's own pace. There are no time restrictions on the test and the test may be stopped at any point and resumed when the student is ready. All test results must be submitted by the test administrator for the student before the end of the testing window.

A test administrator designated by your child's school will administer the tests to your child in a one-on-one environment. Your child will be able to respond in his or her most appropriate

modality (oral, signed language, picture system, or augmentative communication device) and use appropriate accommodations that have been documented by the Individual Educational Plan (IEP) team members.

5. How is the alternate assessment designed for students with significant cognitive disabilities?

The NMAPA is designed to be accessible to students with diverse and significant disabilities. First, the test contains performance tasks that vary in complexity. Second, the test uses picture symbols and stimuli to engage students in the content. Third, the test allows students to complete the tasks using their preferred method of communication (e.g., pointing, eye gaze, assistive technology, oral response, sign language) and test materials can be adapted to the specific needs and accommodations of the student. Fourth, two types of scripted test questions are used: questions where the teacher rates the student's level of engagement; and scaffolded questions, where students are often given multiple opportunities to respond correctly. Finally, there is no time restriction on the test; the test may be stopped at any point and resumed when the student is ready.

6. In which grades and content areas will my child be tested?

The NMAPA is administered by grade band (3-5, 6-8, High School). Students will take the NMAPA in the same grades and content areas that are administered for New Mexico State tests in grades 3-8. High school students take the NMAPA in grade 10 and 11. All students will be tested in English language arts and mathematics. Students in grades 4, 7, and 11 will be tested in science. Students in grade 11 will also be assessed in social studies.

7. Can my child earn a high school diploma if he or she participates in the Alternate Assessment?

The NMAPA is the "alternate assessment" to the PARCC and SBA assessments. If a student is eligible to participate in the alternate assessments per the NMAPA participation guidelines, a passing score in each of the assessed content areas — ELA, mathematics, science and social studies — may be used in lieu of attaining the passing score on the PARCC and SBA assessments for the graduation requirement.

8. When will I receive my child's results?

The Family Score Report for the NMAPA will be sent to your child's district in the summer. Check with your child's school to determine when you will receive your child's report. The score reports for the NMAPA will show your child's score and performance level on each content area of the test. It will also explain what the typical student at your child's proficiency level knows and can do in each content area.

9. What does my child's performance level tell me?

The performance levels indicate how often and accurately your child demonstrates the knowledge and skills being tested. Students are expected to demonstrate these skills at a proficient level or higher. For students who took the high school NMAPA, families are encouraged to speak with their child's school regarding the potential consequences of not passing part or all of the high school NMAPA. Your child's teacher will continue to work with your child to provide access to the general education curriculum and build upon his or her

success. For more information on NMAPA Family Score Reports, visit the New Mexico Assessment Portal (<http://nmapa-portal.org>) and download the Score Reports Interpretive Guide which walks through features of the reports and what they mean.

10. Can I receive my Family Score Report in a Spanish?

Yes– for more information, please contact the New Mexico Public Education Department at 505-827-5861.

11. Where can I learn more about New Mexico’s Alternate Assessment?

Families can visit the New Mexico Alternate Assessment Portal (<http://nmapa-portal.org>) or the [PED website](#) to find more information and sample tasks for the NMAPA. Families are also encouraged to speak with their child’s teacher to learn more.