



# State Learning Standards & Testing

## What are learning standards?

The Washington State K-12 Learning Standards define what all students should know and be able to do at each grade level.

## Why do we need them?

Learning standards create a common set of rigorous expectations for students, whichever school they attend, and provide the foundation for teachers to identify student learning goals and progress toward those goals.

## Which content areas have learning standards?

Standards exist in math, English language arts, science, social studies, health, physical education, arts, computer science, financial education, educational technology, world languages, and several other areas.

## Why do we have state tests?

Measuring student progress on important skills and knowledge is key for families and teachers to know if students are on track to graduate with options, or if they might need extra help or advanced learning opportunities.

Testing data is also a tool for schools, districts, and the state to help educators improve instruction for all students. Statewide testing also helps ensure all public school students, no matter where they go to school, have access to a quality education.

## How do tests help students meet graduation requirements?

High school students typically take the English language arts and math assessments the spring of their 10th grade year. Students who earn a certain score on either or both tests can use those results to meet the graduation pathway requirement, corresponding with the student's [High School and Beyond Plan](#).

### TOP 5 FACTS about Washington's K-12 Learning Standards and Assessments

1

#### *Real-world skills*

Washington's learning standards and assessments focus on real-world skills that students are learning and practicing in the classroom every day such as problem solving, critical thinking, and writing. On assessments, students show their work, write, and explain their answers as part of the assessment process, thus measuring skills and knowledge they will need to pursue the career path of their choice.

2

#### *Identifying Needs*

The assessments help identify how districts and the state are doing in meeting all students' learning needs, and to direct resources accordingly.

3

#### *Testing is just one measure*

State testing is one of several indicators, in combination with report cards, teacher feedback, and classroom work used to create a complete picture of a student's progress in school.

4

#### *The right stuff*

Washington's state learning standards and the aligned assessments are designed to prepare students for post-high school education and training, work, and life.

5

#### *Accessible for all students*

The Smarter Balanced tests are designed to accommodate all students, including those with disabilities and English language learners.

**LEARN MORE!**

*Learning Standards*

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*State Testing*

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