



Q. What are the Florida Standards and Florida Standards Assessments?

A. The Florida Standards are the content standards that identify the expectations for what students enrolled in Florida schools need to know and be able to do. The Florida Standards in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics were approved by the Florida State Board of Education (SBOE) in February 2014 and were fully implemented in grades K-12 in the 2014-2015 school year. All Florida schools teach the Florida Standards. The Florida Standards Assessments (FSA) provide parents and families, teachers, policy makers, and the general public with information regarding how well students are learning the Florida Standards.

Q. How do the Florida Standards benefit my student?

A. The Florida Standards, adopted by the State Board of Education in February 2014, prepare Florida students for success in college, career, and life by emphasizing analytical thinking. The Florida Standards Assessments provide a more authentic assessment of the Florida Standards because they include more than multiple-choice questions. Students are asked to create graphs, interact with test content, and write and respond in different ways than required on traditional tests. Question types assess students' higher-order thinking skills in keeping with the higher expectations of the Florida Standards. Students, educators, and parents and families are able to preview samples of question types by accessing practice tests that are available in the FSA Portal.

Q. Are all students required to take the statewide assessments?

A. Per [Florida Statute 1008.22](#), **public school students** are required to participate in the statewide assessment program. Public school students attending private school through a school choice scholarship program, such as the McKay Scholarship Program or Florida Tax Credit (FTC) Scholarship Program, may take the FSA and NGSSS assessments. **Home Education Program students** may participate in the appropriate grade-level statewide assessments if they are used as the chosen measure of yearly progress. At the beginning of each school year, parents/guardians must notify the district testing office of their intention to use the FSA as that year's annual measure of their Home Education Program student's progress.

Q. Do students with disabilities participate in the FSA?

A. All **students with disabilities** participate in the statewide assessment program. Students with disabilities participate in the FSA without accommodations or with accommodations, depending on the student's individual educational plan (IEP). A small number of students with disabilities who have an IEP may not be required to take the FSA. Only those students who meet the exclusion criteria set forth in [State Board Rule 6A-1.0943, Florida Administrative Code, Statewide Assessment for Students with Disabilities](#), can be excluded from taking the FSA. Specifically, students whose demonstrated cognitive ability prevents them from completing the required coursework and achieving the state standards and who require extensive direct instruction to accomplish and transfer skills and competencies needed for domestic, community living, leisure, and vocational activities may be excluded from taking the statewide assessment. If a student meets the requirements described above and the IEP team determines that it is not appropriate for the student to take the FSA, the student is required to take the [Florida Standards Alternate Assessment](#) (FSAA). There is also a special exemption from participation in the statewide assessment due to extraordinary circumstances or medical complexity. For additional information about the statewide

assessment program as it pertains to students with disabilities, please visit the Exceptional Student Education page on the FDOE website: <http://www.fldoe.org/academics/exceptional-student-edu/>.

Q. Do English Language Learners participate in the FSA?

A. All English Language Learners (ELLs) participate in statewide assessments. ELLs who have been enrolled in school in the United States for less than one year may be exempt from the FSA ELA assessments (Reading and Writing). Exempt ELLs must participate in Access for ELLs 2.0. Additionally, all ELLs enrolled in tested grade levels and subjects are expected to participate in Mathematics, Science, and EOC assessments regardless of how long these students have been enrolled in a U.S. school.

Q. May students receive testing accommodations on the FSA?

A. **Students with disabilities**, in accordance with [State Board Rule 6A-1.0943, Florida Administrative Code \(FAC\)](#), are required to be provided with testing accommodations if they meet the following criteria:

- have been assigned to a special program, according to State Board Rule 6A-6.0331, FAC, and
- have a current IEP or Section 504 plan outlining the appropriate allowable accommodations that should be used in the classroom and on the statewide assessment to meet the individual needs of the student.

Every effort is made to provide a level playing field for students with disabilities taking the FSA and seeking a standard high school diploma. **English Language Learners (ELLs)** are required to receive the appropriate allowable accommodations if they are currently receiving services in a program operated in accordance with an approved district ELL Plan. It is the responsibility of local school educators to work with students and parents/guardians to identify the allowable testing accommodations.

Q. When will my student take the assessments?

A. Your district or school will provide you with the specific dates your student will test. The testing windows for this year’s FSA Assessment program are located at: [Florida Statewide Assessment Program 2016-2017 Schedule](#).

Q. What FSA tests are administered?

A.

Grade	Assessments
3	ELA - Reading, Mathematics
4	ELA - Writing/Reading, Mathematics
5	ELA - Writing/Reading, Mathematics
6	ELA - Writing/Reading, Mathematics
7	ELA - Writing/Reading, Mathematics
8	ELA - Writing/Reading, Mathematics
9	ELA - Writing/Reading
10	ELA - Writing/Reading

In addition, the following FSA End-of-Course (EOC) Assessments are administered to students enrolled in and completing an applicable course:

- Algebra 1 End-of-Course Assessment
- Geometry End-of-Course Assessment
- Algebra 2 End-of-Course Assessment

Q. How long are the tests?

A. All **FSA ELA Writing** assessments are administered in one 120-minute test session.

Grade	Session Length	Number of Sessions
4	120 minutes	1
5	120 minutes	1
6	120 minutes	1
7	120 minutes	1
8	120 minutes	1
9	120 minutes	1
10	120 minutes	1

All **FSA ELA Reading** assessments are administered over two days.

Grade	Session Length	Number of Sessions
3	80 minutes	2
4	80 minutes	2
5	80 minutes	2
6	85 minutes	2
7	85 minutes	2
8	85 minutes	2
9	90 minutes	2
10	90 minutes	2

All **FSA Mathematics** assessments are administered over two days, including those consisting of three sessions. For Grades 6-8, Session 1 must be administered on Day 1 and Sessions 2 and 3 on Day 2.

Grade	Session Length	Number of Sessions
3	80 minutes	2
4	80 minutes	2
5	80 minutes	2
6	60 minutes	3
7	60 minutes	3
8	60 minutes	3

All **FSA EOC** assessments are administered over two days. Any student who has not completed a session by the end of the allotted time may continue working; however, each session may last no longer than half the length of a typical school day.

Subject	Session Length	Number of Sessions
Algebra 1	90 minutes	2
Geometry	90 minutes	2
Algebra 2	90 minutes	2

Q. Can my student practice taking the test?

A. Prior to administering each computer-based assessment, test administrators conduct a practice test that contains sample test items to prepare students for the item types, tools, and online interface they will encounter during testing. [Practice tests](#) are available in the FSA Portal for students to practice on their own as often as they like.

Q. Are all assessments administered on the computer?

A. For the 2016–2017 school year, students in grade 3 will take the ELA Reading assessment on paper and students in grades 4–7 will take the ELA Writing assessment on paper. Also, students whose individual educational plans (IEPs) or Section 504 Plans indicate a need for paper-based format will be provided a paper test. All other assessments are computer-based.

Q. Can my student test on paper instead of the computer?

A. Paper-based tests for computer-based test (CBT) administrations are only provided for students who cannot access assessments on the computer and whose individual educational plans (IEPs) or Section 504 Plans indicate a need for paper-based format.

Q. How can I support my student?

A. Parents and families can promote student success by staying involved in their student’s education, offering positive support and feedback, and encouraging their child to relax and do his or her very best. By staying connected with their student’s school and teachers and taking advantage of online resources, such as school websites and portals, parents and families can stay informed and be equipped to meet the needs of their student at home. To help students, parents/guardians, and educators understand what the FSA test items will look like, the department provides computer-based and paper-based practice tests on the FSA Portal.

Q. Can I talk to my student about the test questions after he or she has finished?

A. We encourage parents and families to ask how their child’s day went and continue to promote student success by offering positive support and feedback. Because the content of statewide assessments is secure, students are asked not to talk about specific test questions, passages, or their responses. Students are asked to sign a Testing Rules Acknowledgement, which states: “Because the content in all statewide assessments is secure, you may not reveal details about the [test content] to anyone. This includes any type of electronic communication, such as texting, emailing, or posting online, for example, on websites like Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram.” **While students may not share information about secure test content after testing, this policy is not intended to prevent students from discussing their testing experiences with their parents and families.**

Q. Are parents/guardians allowed to review the assessment?

A. Parents/guardians are not permitted to see their student’s actual FSA test because FSA items may be used on future assessments. Allowing the general public to review the tests would compromise the test items, thereby depleting the supply of test questions for future test administrations. Statewide assessments are confidential under the authority of Section 1008.23, [Florida Statutes](#).

Q. Can my student use a calculator?

A. Calculators are not permitted for grades 3–6 FSA Mathematics assessments. Grades 7 and 8 FSA Mathematics and Algebra 1, Geometry, and Algebra 2 EOC assessments include a scientific calculator in the test delivery system. The scientific calculator is available for **Sessions 2 and 3** of the grades 7 and 8 Mathematics assessments and for **Session 2** of the Algebra 1, Geometry, and

Algebra 2 EOC assessments. Approved handheld scientific calculators MAY be provided to ALL students during the appropriate test sessions. Check with your school or district for local policies regarding handheld calculators. Please note that if calculators are provided for non-calculator tests (grades 3-6 Mathematics) or a non-calculator test session (Session 1 of grades 7 and 8 Mathematics and EOCs), **the tests will be invalidated.**

Q. What is test invalidation?

A. FDOE is dedicated to reporting test scores that are valid and reliable representations of student mastery of the Florida Standards. If a situation or error occurs during test administration and it is determined that it threatens the validity of test results, the test(s) is (are) invalidated. Some common reasons for test invalidation include, but are not limited to, cheating, possession of an electronic device (e.g., cell phone), or access to any unauthorized aid during testing.

Q. Can my student retake an assessment if his or her test is invalidated?

A. Students may not retake the same test during an established test administration window. If they were to take the test again it would compromise the validity of the test results because they had already been exposed to the content of the test. If your student's test is invalidated, contact his or her school to determine if alternate measures will be used for local purposes. There are retake opportunities for assessments to meet graduation requirements (Grade 10 ELA and Algebra 1 EOC), as well as other EOC assessments, at different times of the year.

Q. If my student becomes ill or needs to leave school before completing a test session, can he or she finish the next day?

A. Students who leave campus before completing a test session (for lunch, an appointment, illness, etc.) will **not** be allowed to complete that test session. If your child does not feel well on the day of testing, it may be best for him or her to wait and be tested on a makeup day.

Q. Can my student have any electronic devices during testing?

A. Students are not permitted to have any electronic devices, including but not limited to cell phones, smartphones, and smartwatches at any time during testing. If a student is found with an electronic device in his or her possession during testing or during a break within a test session, his or her test will be invalidated. Best practice is for students to leave devices at home or in their lockers on the day of testing.

Q. What is the Statewide Science Assessment?

A. The [Statewide Science Assessment](#) measures student success with the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS) for students in grades 5 and 8.

Q. Where can I find more information about the Florida Standards?

A. CPALMS stands for "Collaborate, Plan, Align, Learn, Motivate and Share." [CPALMS](#) is a one-stop online educational portal with nearly 9,000 reviewed and approved resources and interactive tools that help Florida's educators effectively implement the Florida Standards. It is Florida's official source for information about the Florida Standards and course descriptions. The standards are used as a guide for instruction and were designed to enable students to excel in an increasingly complex, interconnected world. CPALMS provides videos, professional development modules, and multimedia tools for educators to assist them in preparing for their classes and determining classroom progress toward the standards. Parents and families can rely on CPALMS to do the following:

- Locate information on the Florida Standards.
- Access the standards and related instructional resources by subject and grade level.
- Access and review course descriptions in order to develop an understanding of the standards their child's classes should be meeting.

Q. What resources are available for me?

A.

- [Graduation Requirements for Florida's Statewide Assessments](#)
- [FSA ELA and Mathematics Fact Sheet](#)
- [FSA EOC Fact Sheet](#)
- [Understanding FSA Reports](#)
- [FDOE Assessment Page](#)