

OVERVIEW

ISASP (Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress) replaced the Iowa Assessments and was taken by students for the first time in the spring of 2019. ISASP measures the Iowa Core Standards in English Language Arts, Mathematics and Science. English Language Arts and Mathematics tests were administered to students in grades 3 through 11. Science tests were administered to students in grades 5, 8 and 10.

Districts were able to select whether to administer the tests online or as paper/pencil instruments. Approximately 75% of Iowa students completed the ISASP online, including our students at JCSD.

ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Individual Student Reports have been provided to schools for dissemination to students and families. These results will be shared on an individual basis with families in our district. Individual and district results will be used to discuss areas of strength and areas for growth regarding curriculum and instruction.

Overall our results are moving in the right direction! The results support the significant focus given to English Language Arts by the state and our district the last several years. Our math data also shows we are moving in the right direction. In recent years we have adopted math materials from Illustrative Mathematics. These materials align with our shared beliefs about math instruction. Illustrative Mathematics was written by the authors of the Common Core and aligns to the standards both in content and rigor. We are in our third year of implementation of these materials at the middle school level and second year for high school. Elementary curricular materials are currently being finalized by the authors and we have committed to a math pilot to gain access to these materials in the 2020-21 school year. The wait we have endured for elementary materials has made math challenging at the elementary level. To address this need we have been using the best available resources and have worked as a math team to adjust the materials to fit our beliefs and allow us to implement evidence based practices. We look forward to getting access to the Illustrative materials as part of the math pilot next year!

Questions have come up across the state regarding the science scores and results. Mainly, why are the expected cut scores higher for science and why are we seeing lower scores overall? The response provided at the statewide curriculum network meeting is included below.

“The ISASP is better aligned to the Iowa Academic Standards. The Iowa science standards were adopted in August 2015, and the 2019-20 school year marks the first year that our standards are to be fully implemented in K-5 and 9-12 with full implementation expected by 2021 for grades 6-8. We know districts across the state have been working to effectively implement the standards and we expect to continue building capacity with regard to teachers use of aligned instructional strategies over the coming years, with a continued focus on standards-aligned instruction and assessment. Districts may find it helpful to review the Iowa Science Standards Implementation Plan and associated resources at the Iowa Core Educator Resources in Science website. Remembering that each test looks at a standards grade band (3-5, 6-8, HS), districts may need to use the science data to analyze students opportunities to learn Iowa science standards at all grade levels.”

For all content areas we will analyze results further for adjustments we can make to curriculum and instruction to continue to improve. We will also analyze individual results to consider supports and enrichments we can provide for all students.

INTERPRETING RESULTS

Performance Level Descriptors specify the level of performance on a test that is required for a student to be classified into a given performance level (such as proficient). The Performance Level Descriptors can be found at <http://iowa.pearsonaccessnext.com/performance-levels/>.

Two cut scores that define three levels of performance (Not-Yet-Proficient, Proficient and Advanced) have been established for the ISASP English Language Arts, Mathematics and Science tests. The Iowa State Board of Education approved the cut scores in September 2019. The cut scores established in 2019 will serve as a baseline for future years.

The ISASP results cannot be directly compared to previous state results due to a number of factors (see table below).

ISASP	Prior to ISASP
All students tested in the spring of 2019	Schools opted to test at any time throughout the year
ISASP was developed to be specifically aligned to the Iowa Core	A national assessment was used
English Language Arts standards in reading, writing and language were measured	Only standards in reading were measured
Essays and constructed-response questions were included in addition to multiple-choice questions	All questions were multiple-choice
Grade-specific content (as defined by the Iowa Core) was measured	Content across two grades was measured
A standard setting study was completed to define cut scores for the three levels of performance.	A statistical procedure was used to define cut scores for the three levels of performance.

NEXT STEPS

An equivalent form of the ISASP will be administered between March 16 and May 15, 2020. The Performance Level Descriptors and cut scores established in 2019 will be used for the interpretation of the 2020 results. An index of student growth will be available after the spring 2020 results are available and relationships between ISASP and ACT will be established as data for Iowa students become available.