



## Comprehensive System of Student Assessment (CSSA)



### **Guide to Test Interpretation for the Grade 10 Standards Based Assessments For Parents and Students Spring 2006**

#### ***Explanation of Examinations and Scoring***

##### **The Purpose of Testing**

The purpose of the Standards Based Assessments (SBAs) is to (a) help determine which students are meeting statewide performance standards; (b) produce statewide information that enables sound decision making by policy makers, parents, educators, and the public; and (c) provide a focus in order to improve instruction [4 AAC 06.700].

##### **What the Standards Based Assessments Measure**

The SBAs measure what students know and are able to do at their grade level in reading, writing, and mathematics as compared to the Alaska Performance Standards/Grade Level Expectations. For detailed information on the standards, please access the Department of Education & Early Development (EED) publication, *Alaska Standards: Content and Performance Standards for Alaska Students* available on the EED website at: <http://www.eed.state.ak.us/standards/>.

## ***What Is the New Test for Tenth-graders?***

The 10<sup>th</sup> grade test combines the Grade 10 Standards Based Assessment (SBA) and the High School Graduation Qualifying Examination (HSGQE). Students will get two sets of scores, one for the HSGQE and one for the Grade 10 SBA. **Only the scores on the HSGQE will determine whether students are eligible for a high school diploma.**

The HSGQE tells us if students have mastered the essential skills that all high school graduates should have. Scores are recorded as proficient or not proficient. Students must score proficient on each section – reading, writing, and mathematics – to be eligible for a high school diploma.

The SBAs tell us how well students meet academic standards for that grade level. They show us where students need help and how schools are performing. SBA scores are recorded in four categories: advanced, proficient, below proficient, and far below proficient.

## ***Components of the SBAs***

Reading, writing, and mathematics are tested on the SBAs. Each content area contains multiple-choice questions with four possible answer choices. These answers are machine-scored. Short- and extended-response questions and writing prompts allow students to demonstrate their skills in more complex levels of thinking. Questions are scored by professional staff experienced in providing reliable and consistent hand scoring. Questions requiring a written response allow for full or partial credit.

### **Reading**

Questions for the reading portion of the SBAs are developed from a variety of written sources. After reading each passage, the student answers questions addressing: comprehending the meaning of words in texts; restating, summarizing, and connecting information; understanding main idea and arguments; following written directions; analyzing the content and structure of genres; analyzing and evaluating literary elements and devices; differentiating between fact and opinion; and connecting themes.

### **Writing**

Questions for the writing portion of the SBAs take the form of multiple-choice, short answer, and longer written narratives in the form of informative/descriptive/persuasive writing. Some multiple-choice questions are based on short fiction or nonfiction passages. The test measures the students' ability to do the following: write about a topic using a thesis statement, well-developed paragraphs, appropriate organization, and a conclusion; write letters, reports, and descriptions; and edit sentences using the spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and grammar conventions of Standard English. Students are asked to revise writing by rearranging and/or adding details, combining sentences for improved fluency, and using appropriate voice for the audience and purpose.

### **Mathematics**

Questions for the mathematics portion of the SBAs assess skills in the areas of: number theory, understanding numbers and mathematical operations, measurement, estimation, computation, number patterns, functions and relationships, solving equations, geometry, organizing and analyzing data, and probability.



**ALASKA COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF STUDENT ASSESSMENT (CSSA)  
STANDARDS BASED ASSESSMENT (SBA)  
STUDENT REPORT  
2006 SPRING**

STUDENT NAME : LAST NAME, FIRST NAME MIDDLE NAME DISTRICT : ALASKA DISTRICT  
BIRTHDATE : 99/99/9999 SCHOOL : ALASKA SCHOOL

GRADE : 10  
STATE ID NUMBER : 9999999999  
DISTRICT ID NUMBER : 9999999999

**Your Student's Overall Performance**

Student's Scale Score	Student's Proficiency Level	Proficient Scale Score
411	Advanced	300
353	Proficient	300
	Not Attempted	

**STANDARDS SKILL PERFORMANCE**

This report provides a record of your student's test results on the SBA in reading, writing, and mathematics.

**Proficiency Levels**

The SBA Examination is designed to measure knowledge and skills against state standards. Scores on these tests are grouped into four proficiency levels. The proficiency level chart shows the scale score ranges associated with each level. Typical characteristics for the proficiency levels can be found at [www.ed.state.ak.us/tis/assessment](http://www.ed.state.ak.us/tis/assessment).

**Scale Score**

The scale score earned by the student determines the student's performance level of proficient or not proficient on the SBA. The points earned are converted into a scale score which takes into consideration the fact that some items on the test are more difficult than others. Therefore, a student can earn the same raw score on two standards and end up with two different scale scores. For this reason, you cannot divide the points earned by the points possible.

**Skills Performance**

Reading, writing, and mathematics are composed of different skills. The chart on the right shows how your student did on these skills.

**Interpretation of Chart**

For each subject, the chart displays where the proficient cut score lies within the possible scale score range (100 - 600). Scores in the shaded area indicate not proficient, whereas scores in the non-shaded area indicate proficient. Scale scores are represented by the diamond (♦).

For example, your student's scale score in reading is 411. Note that the diamond representing this score falls in the advanced scale score range. If your student were to take a similar test multiple times, the range of these scores would fall between 378 and 444 (as represented by the line) 80% of the time.

**Your Student's Performance by Standard  
PROFICIENCY LEVELS AND PROBABLE SCALE SCORE RANGES\***

Subject/Standard	Points Possible	Points Earned	Scale Score Earned
Reading	72	63	411
R4.1 Word Identification Skills	10	8	435
R4.2 Forming a General Understanding	45	42	451
R4.5-R4.8 Analysis of Content and Structure	17	12	353

Subject/Standard	Points Possible	Points Earned	Scale Score Earned
Writing	50	37	353
W4.1 Write Using a Variety of Forms	25	18	338
W4.3 Structures and Conventions	14	10	349
W4.4 Revise	11	9	386

Subject/Standard	Points Possible	Points Earned	Scale Score Earned
Mathematics	40		
M1.4 Numeration/Estimation and Computation	10		
M2.4, M5.4 Measurement/Geometry	10		
M4.4 Functions & Relationships	10		
M6.4 Statistics/Probability	10		

\*Proficiency Level: A = Advanced, P = Proficient, BP = Below Proficient, FBP = Far Below Proficient

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**Reading the Student Report**

- A** Presents student demographics.
- B** Indicates the student's scale score and proficiency level in reading, writing, and mathematics. In order to be considered proficient, the student must score on or above the Alaska Proficient Scale Score.
- C** Describes the proficiency levels reported in section B. Scores on the SBAs are grouped into four proficiency levels. The skills necessary for a student to be proficient are described on the back of the Student Report, along with the range of scale scores associated with each level.
- D** Describes the scale scores reported in section B. The scale score earned by the student determines the student's proficiency level of advanced, proficient, below proficient, or far below proficient on the SBAs. The points earned are converted to a scale score, which takes into consideration the fact that some items on the test are more difficult than others. Therefore, a student can earn the same raw score on two standards and end up with two different scale scores. For this reason, you cannot divide the points earned by the points possible.
- E** Lists the Performance Standard categories grouped by the three content tests.

- F** Lists the total points possible for the Performance Standard categories on the tests.
- G** Lists the points earned by the student for the Performance Standards in each test. Points earned are not valid for comparisons across grades, subjects, and/or standards due to variations among tests. The same raw score on two standards usually results in two different scale scores depending on the number of questions and the difficulty of the questions. For this reason, you cannot divide the points earned by the points possible to determine accurate percentages.
- H** Lists the scale score equivalent for points earned.
- I** Explains the information found in the probable scale score range chart.
- J** Graphically illustrates the student's scale score (◆), the student's 80% confidence interval, and the proficiency cut score for Performance Standards and tests.

## ***Frequently Asked Question***

### **Question:**

Is it possible for a student to answer all of the items correctly in a standard and not get the highest possible scale score (600)?

### **Answer:**

Yes.

- A perfect score in a standard with easier items will translate into a lower scale score than a perfect score in a standard with harder items.
  - Both maximum scores may be less than the maximum score for the overall test.
    - This is due to the distribution of item difficulties and the number of items.
    - It is easier to answer 11 of 11 items correctly in a single standard than it is to answer 64 of 64 items correctly on the entire test.
      - The scale score for answering all of the items correctly on a standard will necessarily represent less ability than answering all of the items correctly on the overall test.
      - Though the scale score span goes from 100 to 600 it does not mean it is possible to get the highest or lowest scale score on every standard or even the overall test.