

# Standards and Assessments

## Standards and assessments form the foundation of an equitable education system in Ohio.

**T**oday, education standards matter more than ever to ensure that each and every student graduates from high school with the skills needed to be successful in post-secondary education and the workplace. The state assessments that measure a student's understanding of those standards are equally important.

Education standards are a set of expectations for what students should know and be able to do at each grade level in certain subject areas like math and English language arts. Ohio began using standards over 15 years ago, updating them periodically based on emerging research and teacher feedback, most recently in early 2017. Noting the increasing importance of skills beyond academic subject areas, the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) included four equal learning domains in its strategic plan: foundational knowledge and skills; well-rounded content; leadership and reasoning; and social-emotional learning.

State assessments, developed by Ohio educators and required by federal and state law, are designed to measure student, school and district performance and ensure equity of expectations and performance. They are one important component for evaluating the academic progress made by students in a school year and for broadly aligning instruction and curriculum to best meet students' needs. However, assessments should not and do not need to be the sole driver of instruction.

In addition to the information state assessments can provide to educators, they are also an important lens

for the public and policymakers to evaluate the performance of schools and districts and to monitor the effectiveness of public investments in our education system.

Together, strong standards and honest assessments serve as the foundation for:

**Equity for each and every student.** All kids can learn at high levels, however, Ohio continues to struggle with equity and opportunity gaps that affect many students. Clearly articulated standards for each grade help close gaps by providing every student rigorous content regardless of their zip code. Standards alone won't achieve equity, but when accompanied by effective instruction and non-academic supports, standards are a foundational tool to ensure equity for all students.

**Success in college and career.** College and career readiness means that high school graduates have the knowledge and skills needed to qualify for—and succeed in—post-secondary job training and/or the education necessary for their chosen career. While the number has been decreasing in recent years, 30 percent of all public high school students graduating in 2016 and entering a public college or university in Ohio took at least one remedial course in English or mathematics.

**Better information for students, families and communities.** Academic standards and aligned assessments give students, families and communities the information they need to evaluate their child's progress and success of local schools.



## P-20 VISION

Each and every Ohio student is actively engaged in their learning, has access to high-quality education opportunities in early childhood, K-12 and post-secondary education and is prepared to enter the workforce and succeed in life.

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## Recommendations

### Expand Education Standards

- The General Assembly, Governor and ODE should maintain challenging and balanced college- and career-ready standards in all core content areas, including the arts.
- The General Assembly and Governor should enable the creation of, and ODE manage the development of, education standards for health.
- ODE should help educators integrate all four domains that contribute to the holistic success of each child into deeper learning opportunities, including leadership and reasoning and social-emotional learning.

### Fully Assess Student Performance

- The General Assembly, Governor and ODE should consistently administer high-quality assessments that accurately measure student performance while continually looking for how new technology and emerging research might make assessments more streamlined and effective.
- ODE should honestly measure and report student performance by setting the bar for proficiency at a level that accurately reflects the skills and knowledge necessary for student success at each grade level and after high school.

## Current Ohio Assessments

	English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science
Grade 3	X	X	
Grade 4	X	X	
Grade 5	X	X	X
Grade 6	X	X	
Grade 7	X	X	
Grade 8	X	X	X
High School Courses	Classes of 2018 & beyond – End-of-course tests in English language arts I & II, algebra I, geometry (or integrated mathematics I & II), biology or physical science (class of 2018 only), American history & American government.		



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## ABOUT PHILANTHROPY OHIO

Philanthropy Ohio is an association of foundations, corporate giving programs, individuals and organizations actively involved in philanthropy in Ohio. Its mission is to lead and equip Ohio philanthropy to be effective, powerful change agents in our communities. It provides the network, tools and knowledge to help people engaged in philanthropy become more effective, powerful change agents in their communities. Together, its more than 220 members hold over \$50 billion in assets and provide over \$4 billion in grants to nonprofit organizations that work to improve the lives of community residents.