

PERFORMANCE MATTERS

News from the CSDE Performance Office



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CT's Framework for advancing equity and promoting renewal post-pandemic

2020-2021 Assessment Data Shows the Positive Effects of In-Person Learning Over Hybrid and Remote Models

The CSDE released [results of the 2020-21 statewide assessments](#). This report provides the first statewide picture of student achievement since the 2018-19 school year. Due to the pandemic, there were wide variations in how different groups of students learned last year (i.e., in-person, hybrid, remote). There were also variations in overall assessment participation and in-person test participation between the students in the three learning models and between different student groups.

Analyses of data from assessments administered in-person revealed:

- In all grades and across most student groups, those who learned in-person (more than 75% of days in-person) during the 2020-21 school year lost the least ground academically.
- Those who learned in *hybrid* (between 25% and 75% of days in-person) or *remote* (less than 25% of days in-person) models showed substantially weaker achievement and growth during the pandemic.
- While academic impacts are seen in all subjects, the observed differences are largest in mathematics.

Additional Key Insights

[Proficiency rates](#) of students in Grades 5-8, compared to their achievement two grades prior, revealed that achievement in 2020-21 was substantially lower than in 2018-19, especially in math, and especially

for those who learned in *hybrid* or *remote* models. This pattern is seen for students regardless of high-needs status (i.e., English learner, student with a disability, and/or a student from a low income family) or race/ethnicity. Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students experienced the largest gaps in proficiency rates pre- and post-pandemic. Gaps were larger in math than English language arts for all student groups.

[Students in Grade 3](#) who learned *in-person* have higher achievement that is closest to the students who tested in 2018-19, while those who learned in *hybrid* or *remote* models reflect lower achievement. Again, the differences are greater in math than English, and this pattern holds true among students with or without high needs. Similar patterns are seen in Grade 4.

The results from the [NGSS](#) and the [Connecticut SAT School Day](#) assessments, for which students do not have prior scores, also reveal lower achievement among those who learned in *hybrid* or *remote* models as compared to those who learned *in-person*.

See the [full report](#) for additional information and analyses including longitudinal growth trajectories, growth model estimations, and remote test administrations.

**NAEP 2019 Science Results Reported for the Nation:
Fourth Grade Scores “Concerning”**

On May 25, 2021, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) released Science results from the 2019 administration of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Results are available for Grades 4, 8, and 12 at the national level. When comparing 2019 average scale scores to the previous administration in 2015, performance in Grades 8 and 12 is unchanged, and Grade 4 performance declined.

NAEP includes a set of contextual questions for students, teachers, and school administrators. These data can be useful when interpreting achievement data. Dr. Erika Shugart, Executive Director of the National Science Teaching Association (NSTA) issued a [statement about the results](#) and shared her organization’s perspective during the release event. She reports that teachers surveyed by NSTA identify lack of time as a major challenge to teaching science in elementary school. Teacher responses to NAEP’s

Reporting metric	Grade 4		Grade 8		Grade 12	
	2019	2019–2015	2019	2019–2015	2019	2019–2015
Average scale score	151	↓ 2	154	◆	150	◆
Percentile scores	90th percentile	◆	196	◆	197	◆
	75th percentile	◆	177	◆	176	◆
	50th percentile	◆	154	↓ 2	151	◆
	25th percentile	◆	129	↓ 4	125	◆
	10th percentile	◆	103	↓ 5	106	↓ 2

◆ No significant change in 2019 ↓ Decrease in 2019

During the [release event](#), NCES representatives spent time teasing apart the decline in Grade 4 performance by examining scores at each of the percentiles. A percentile score indicates the score below which a certain percentage of students performed. For example, if the scale score at the 90th percentile is 196, that means that 90 percent of students earned scores lower than 196.

The percentile discussion focused on the change in scores at each of the percentiles from 2015 to 2019 (see table above). The report shows that higher performing Grade 4 students (i.e. students at the 75th and 90th percentile) had no change in performance when comparing 2019 scores to 2015. The decline in overall performance is occurring because scale scores are declining at the 50th, 25th, and 10th percentile. This raises concerns that our nation’s lowest performing fourth graders are losing ground. Grade 8 students performing at the 10th percentile also have lower scores when compared to 2015, but other percentile groups held steady. There were no changes in percentile scores for Grade 12.

contextual questions show that nearly a quarter of Grade 4 students have teachers who report providing less than two hours of science instruction in a typical week. This falls far short of the NSTA’s recommendation of 60 minutes daily. The concern that other subjects are crowding out science has been an ongoing concern for science education advocates, and the concern is amplified given the instructional time constraints caused by the pandemic.

The full NAEP Science report including performance data by content area (Physical Science, Life Science, and Earth and Space Science) is available at <https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/highlights/science/2019/>.

In addition to the achievement report, NCES released three scenario-based tasks. To explore the tasks, visit <https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/science/sample-questions/?grade=4>.

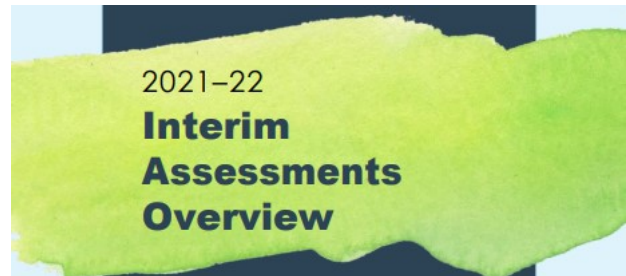
Contact [Renee Savoie](#) with any questions.

38 New Smarter Balanced Interim Block Assessments Available in 2021-22

Interim assessments allow teachers to check students' progress at mastering specific concepts at strategic points throughout the year. Teachers can use this information to support their instruction and help students meet the challenge of college- and career-ready standards.

For 2021-22, 38 new Focused Interim Assessment Blocks (FIABs) across ELA and math are now available. In ELA, the blocks mainly focus on Claim 2, with new blocks to assess writing and revising opinion/argumentative and informational/explanatory texts. In math, focused blocks have been created to address those targets in Claim 1 without FIABs.

The updated [Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments Overview](#) provides an explanation and lists of all blocks by content area and grade.



In total, across all grades and both ELA and math, **187 interim block assessments** are available to help inform instruction.

Educators can now access answer keys that include all item metadata using the Interim Assessment Item Portal in Tools for Teachers. For more information, visit [Tools for Teachers](#).



Performance Matters Forum

Date: Wednesday, December 8, 2021

Location: Connecticut Convention Center, Hartford, CT

This year's sessions will feature "Curated Roundtables" for discussions on topics such as Assessment, College and Career Readiness, Student Engagement, Social Emotional Learning and Supports, Special Education, and English Learners.