

Grade 4 Reading/English Language Arts

- The charts below show state cut scores compared to NAEP Proficiency, in terms of the percent of students meeting or exceeding each bar, for Florida (Commissioner's proposed cut score) and the ten highest performing states in terms of student achievement, as determined by the latest Quality Counts ranking, and for Florida (Commissioner's proposed cut score) and the other most populous states.

Analysis of the Top Ten Performing States based on Student Achievement

Quality Counts Rank on Student Achievement	State	State Test	State Cut Point	% At or Above State Cut Point on State Test	% At or Above Proficient on NAEP, 2015	Difference Between NAEP and State Test
1	Massachusetts	PARCC	Level 4 out of 5 - "Met Expectations"	57%	50%	-7%
2	Maryland	PARCC	Level 4 out of 5 - "Met Expectations"	Not Released	37%	
3	New Jersey	PARCC	Level 4 out of 5 - "Met Expectations"	51%	43%	-8%
4	New Hampshire	Smarter Balanced	Level 3 out of 4 - "Met the Achievement Standard"	56%	46%	-10%
5	Vermont	Smarter Balanced	Level 3 out of 4 - "Met the Achievement Standard"	51%	45%	-6%
6	Minnesota	State Test (MCA)	Level 3 out of 4 - "Meets Standards"	58%	39%	-19%
7	Florida	State Test (FSA)	Level 3 out of 5 - "Satisfactory"	54%	39%	-15%
8	Pennsylvania	State Test (PSSA)	Level 3 out of 4 - "Proficient"	59%	41%	-18%
9	Washington	Smarter Balanced	Level 3 out of 4 - "Met the Achievement Standard"	54%	40%	-14%
10	Virginia	State Test (SOL)	Level 3 out of 4 - "Pass/Proficient"	77%	43%	-34%

Analysis of the Five Most Populous States

Quality Counts Rank on Student Achievement	State	State Test	State Cut Point	% At or Above State Cut Point on State Test	% At or Above Proficient on NAEP, 2015	Difference Between NAEP and State Test
33	California	Smarter Balanced	Level 3 out of 4 - "Met the Achievement Standard"	40%	28%	-12%
21	Texas	State Test (STARR)	Level 2 out of 3 - "Satisfactory"	74%	31%	-43%
7	Florida	State Test (FSA)	Level 3 out of 5 - "Satisfactory"	54%	39%	-15%
20	New York	State Test (NYSTP)	Level 3 out of 4 - "Proficient"	33%	36%	3%
26	Illinois	PARCC	Level 4 out of 5 - "Met Expectations"	37%	35%	-2%

- Among the ten highest performing states, the differential between NAEP Proficiency and the state cut varies widely. **There is no relationship between the magnitude of the difference and high student achievement. In other words, even though some states may have larger differentials than others, they each are among the highest performing ten states in terms of student achievement.**
- Though Florida's differential is larger than all but Texas among large states, Florida is the highest performing large state, ranking 7th in terms of student achievement.**
- For the five states that use a five-achievement level assessment score (MA, MD, NJ, FL, and IL), all but Florida use Level 4 out of 5 as their bar. **For these states, it is Level 4, not Level 3, which they have aligned more closely to NAEP Proficiency.**
- Additionally, though these states have aligned their Level 4 more closely to NAEP Proficiency, in many instances they are not holding students accountable to that bar, setting lower passing scores or other alternatives for students to meet in order to graduate.¹**
- In Florida, statute defines student "passing" as a Level 3 or higher (s. 1008.34(1)(a), F.S.). **Setting one bar for "satisfactory" and another lower bar for "passing" is not only inconsistent with state law, but also sends a confusing, mixed message to parents and students.**

¹ <http://education.state.nj.us/broadcasts/2015/NOV/05/14263/Updated%20Grad%20Requirements%20with%20PARCC%20threshold%20scores.pdf>
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3	New Jersey	PARCC	Level 4 out of 5 - "Met Expectations"	52%	41%	-11%
4	New Hampshire	Smarter Balanced	Level 3 out of 4 - "Met the Achievement Standard"	58%	45%	-13%
5	Vermont	Smarter Balanced	Level 3 out of 4 - "Met the Achievement Standard"	53%	44%	-9%
6	Minnesota	State Test (MCA)	Level 3 out of 4 - "Meets Standards"	56%	40%	-16%
7	Florida	State Test (FSA)	Level 3 out of 5 - "Satisfactory"	55%	30%	-25%
8	Pennsylvania	State Test (PSSA)	Level 3 out of 4 - "Proficient"	58%	39%	-19%
9	Washington	Smarter Balanced	Level 3 out of 4 - "Met the Achievement Standard"	56%	37%	-19%
10	Virginia	State Test (SOL)	Level 3 out of 4 - "Pass/Proficient"	75%	36%	-39%

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21	Texas	State Test (STARR)	Level 2 out of 3 - "Satisfactory"	78%	28%	-50%
7	Florida	State Test (FSA)	Level 3 out of 5 - "Satisfactory"	55%	30%	-25%
20	New York	State Test (NYSTP)	Level 3 out of 4 - "Proficient"	35%	33%	-2%
26	Illinois	PARCC	Level 4 out of 5 - "Met Expectations"	38%	35%	-3%

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- Additionally, though these states have aligned their Level 4 more closely to NAEP Proficiency, in many instances they are not holding students accountable to that bar, setting lower passing scores or other alternatives for students to meet in order to graduate.²**
- In Florida, statute defines student "passing" as a Level 3 or higher (s. 1008.34(1)(a), F.S.). **Setting one bar for "satisfactory" and another lower bar for "passing" is not only inconsistent with state law, but also sends a confusing, mixed message to parents and students.**

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Grade 4 Mathematics

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2	Maryland	PARCC	Level 4 out of 5 - "Met Expectations"	Not Released	40%	
3	New Jersey	PARCC	Level 4 out of 5 - "Met Expectations"	41%	47%	6%
4	New Hampshire	Smarter Balanced	Level 3 out of 4 - "Met the Achievement Standard"	49%	51%	2%
5	Vermont	Smarter Balanced	Level 3 out of 4 - "Met the Achievement Standard"	44%	43%	-1%
6	Minnesota	State Test (MCA)	Level 3 out of 4 - "Meets Standards"	70%	53%	-17%
7	Florida	State Test (FSA)	Level 3 out of 5 - "Satisfactory"	59%	42%	-17%
8	Pennsylvania	State Test (PSSA)	Level 3 out of 4 - "Proficient"	44%	45%	1%
9	Washington	Smarter Balanced	Level 3 out of 4 - "Met the Achievement Standard"	54%	47%	-7%
10	Virginia	State Test (SOL)	Level 3 out of 4 - "Pass/Proficient"	84%	47%	-37%

Analysis of the Five Most Populous States

Quality Counts Rank on Student Achievement	State	State Test	State Cut Point	% At or Above State Cut Point on State Test	% At or Above Proficient on NAEP, 2015	Difference Between NAEP and State Test
33	California	Smarter Balanced	Level 3 out of 4 - "Met the Achievement Standard"	35%	29%	-6%
21	Texas	State Test (STARR)	Level 2 out of 3 - "Satisfactory"	73%	44%	-29%
7	Florida	State Test (FSA)	Level 3 out of 5 - "Satisfactory"	59%	42%	-17%
20	New York	State Test (NYSTP)	Level 3 out of 4 - "Proficient"	43%	35%	-8%
26	Illinois	PARCC	Level 4 out of 5 - "Met Expectations"	28%	37%	9%

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Grade 8 Mathematics

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1	Massachusetts	PARCC	Level 4 out of 5 - "Met Expectations"	53%	51%	-2%
2	Maryland	PARCC	Level 4 out of 5 - "Met Expectations"	Not Released	35%	
3	New Jersey	PARCC	Level 4 out of 5 - "Met Expectations"	24%	46%	22%
4	New Hampshire	Smarter Balanced	Level 3 out of 4 - "Met the Achievement Standard"	44%	46%	2%
5	Vermont	Smarter Balanced	Level 3 out of 4 - "Met the Achievement Standard"	40%	42%	2%
6	Minnesota	State Test (MCA)	Level 3 out of 4 - "Meets Standards"	58%	48%	-10%
7	Florida	State Test (FSA)	Level 3 out of 5 - "Satisfactory"	45%	26%	-19%
8	Pennsylvania	State Test (PSSA)	Level 3 out of 4 - "Proficient"	30%	36%	6%
9	Washington	Smarter Balanced	Level 3 out of 4 - "Met the Achievement Standard"	46%	39%	-7%
10	Virginia	State Test (SOL)	Level 3 out of 4 - "Pass/Proficient"	74%	38%	-36%

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33	California	Smarter Balanced	Level 3 out of 4 - "Met the Achievement Standard"	33%	27%	-6%
21	Texas	State Test (STARR)	Level 2 out of 3 - "Satisfactory"	75%	32%	-43%
7	Florida	State Test (FSA)	Level 3 out of 5 - "Satisfactory"	45%	26%	-19%
20	New York	State Test (NYSTP)	Level 3 out of 4 - "Proficient"	22%	31%	9%
26	Illinois	PARCC	Level 4 out of 5 - "Met Expectations"	31%	32%	1%

- Among the ten highest performing states, the differential between NAEP Proficiency and the state cut varies widely. **There is no relationship between the magnitude of the difference and high student achievement. In other words, even though some states may have larger differentials than others, they each are among the highest performing ten states in terms of student achievement.**
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- Additionally, though these states have aligned their Level 4 more closely to NAEP Proficiency, in many instances they are not holding students accountable to that bar, setting lower passing scores or other alternatives for students to meet in order to graduate.⁴**
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Analysis of Top Performing or Large States on Assessments with Five Achievement Levels

Grade 4 Reading/English Language Arts

Quality Counts Rank on Student Achievement	State	State Test	State Cut Point Descriptors	% At or Above Level 3	% At or Above Level 4	% At or Above Proficient on NAEP, 2015
1	Massachusetts	PARCC	Level 3 - "Approached Expectations" Level 4 - "Met Expectations"	82%	57%	50%
2	Maryland	PARCC	Level 3 - "Approached Expectations" Level 4 - "Met Expectations"	Not Released	Not Released	37%
3	New Jersey	PARCC	Level 3 - "Approached Expectations" Level 4 - "Met Expectations"	78%	51%	43%
7	Florida	State Test (FSA)	Level 3 - "Satisfactory" Level 4 - "Above Satisfactory"	54%	27%	39%
26	Illinois	PARCC	Level 3 - "Approached Expectations" Level 4 - "Met Expectations"	67%	37%	35%

Grade 8 Reading/English Language Arts

Quality Counts Rank on Student Achievement	State	State Test	State Cut Point Descriptors	% At or Above Level 3	% At or Above Level 4	% At or Above Proficient on NAEP, 2015
1	Massachusetts	PARCC	Level 3 - "Approached Expectations" Level 4 - "Met Expectations"	84%	64%	46%
2	Maryland	PARCC	Level 3 - "Approached Expectations" Level 4 - "Met Expectations"	Not Released	Not Released	37%
3	New Jersey	PARCC	Level 3 - "Approached Expectations" Level 4 - "Met Expectations"	74%	52%	41%
7	Florida	State Test (FSA)	Level 3 - "Satisfactory" Level 4 - "Above Satisfactory"	55%	29%	30%
26	Illinois	PARCC	Level 3 - "Approached Expectations" Level 4 - "Met Expectations"	65%	38%	35%

- For the five states that use a five-achievement level assessment score (MA, MD, NJ, FL, and IL), all but Florida use Level 4 out of 5 as their bar. **For these states, it is Level 4, not Level 3, which they have aligned more closely to NAEP Proficiency.**
- In Grade 4 and 8 Reading/ELA, comparing Florida’s Level 4 to NAEP Proficiency, the gap with NAEP Proficiency is in the state’s favor. **Namely, Florida’s bar for Level 4 is more rigorous than the NAEP Proficiency bar.**

Analysis of Top Performing or Large States on Assessments with Five Achievement Levels

Grade 4 Mathematics

Quality Counts Rank on Student Achievement	State	State Test	State Cut Point Descriptors	% At or Above Level 3	% At or Above Level 4	% At or Above Proficient on NAEP, 2015
1	Massachusetts	PARCC	Level 3 - "Approached Expectations" Level 4 - "Met Expectations"	76%	47%	54%
2	Maryland	PARCC	Level 3 - "Approached Expectations" Level 4 - "Met Expectations"	Not Released	Not Released	40%
3	New Jersey	PARCC	Level 3 - "Approached Expectations" Level 4 - "Met Expectations"	71%	41%	47%
7	Florida	State Test (FSA)	Level 3 - "Satisfactory" Level 4 - "Above Satisfactory"	59%	31%	42%
26	Illinois	PARCC	Level 3 - "Approached Expectations" Level 4 - "Met Expectations"	55%	28%	37%

Grade 8 Mathematics

Quality Counts Rank on Student Achievement	State	State Test	State Cut Point Descriptors	% At or Above Level 3	% At or Above Level 4	% At or Above Proficient on NAEP, 2015
1	Massachusetts	PARCC	Level 3 - "Approached Expectations" Level 4 - "Met Expectations"	75%	53%	51%
2	Maryland	PARCC	Level 3 - "Approached Expectations" Level 4 - "Met Expectations"	Not Released	Not Released	35%
3	New Jersey	PARCC	Level 3 - "Approached Expectations" Level 4 - "Met Expectations"	52%	24%	46%
7	Florida	State Test (FSA)	Level 3 - "Satisfactory" Level 4 - "Above Satisfactory"	45%	18%	26%
26	Illinois	PARCC	Level 3 - "Approached Expectations" Level 4 - "Met Expectations"	53%	31%	32%

- For the five states that use a five-achievement level assessment score (MA, MD, NJ, FL, and IL), all but Florida use Level 4 out of 5 as their bar. **For these states, it is Level 4, not Level 3, which they have aligned more closely to NAEP Proficiency.**
- In Grade 4 Mathematics, though each of the states' gaps with Level 4 and NAEP Proficiency are in the state's favor (i.e., more rigorous), Florida's Level 4 is the most rigorous, with a gap of 11 percentage points in the state's favor between Level 4 and NAEP Proficiency.
- In Grade 8 Mathematics, among the states, New Jersey, Florida, and Illinois, each have a gap between Level 4 and NAEP Proficiency that is in the state's favor.

FSA English Language Arts

	Commissioner's Recommendation on FSA Level 3 (Satisfactory) and Above	NAEP Proficient and Above, 2015	Difference between NAEP Proficient and Commissioner's Level 3 (Satisfactory) Recommendation	FSA Level 3 (Satisfactory) and Above, If Set Within 10 Points of NAEP Proficient	NAEP Proficient and Above, 2015	Difference between NAEP Proficient and FSA Level 3 (Satisfactory), if Set Within 10 Points of NAEP Proficient
Grade 3	53%			49%		
Grade 4	54%	39%	-15%	50%	39%	-11%
Grade 5	52%			49%		
Grade 6	51%			44%		
Grade 7	51%			43%		
Grade 8	55%	30%	-25%	41%	30%	-11%
Grade 9	53%			38%		
Grade 10	51%			36%		

FSA Mathematics and EOCs

	Commissioner's Recommendation on FSA Level 3 (Satisfactory) and Above	NAEP Proficient and Above, 2015	Difference between NAEP Proficient and Commissioner's Level 3 (Satisfactory) Recommendation	FSA Level 3 (Satisfactory) and Above, If Set Within 10 Points of NAEP Proficient	NAEP Proficient and Above, 2015	Difference between NAEP Proficient and FSA Level 3 (Satisfactory), if Set Within 10 Points of NAEP Proficient
Grade 3	58%			51%		
Grade 4	59%	42%	-17%	51%	42%	-9%
Grade 5	55%			47%		
Grade 6	50%			43%		
Grade 7	52%			45%		
Grade 8	45%	26%	-19%	37%	26%	-11%
Algebra 1	56%			51%		
Geometry	53%			50%		
Algebra 2	36%			36%		

Impact of "NAEP-like" cut scores for non-NAEP Grades based on extrapolation

Since the EOCs are not on a vertical scale, and are non-NAEP assessed subjects, Algebra 1 and Geometry EOC cut scores were set at Educator Panel recommendations, which were higher than both the Reactor Panel and the Commissioner's recommendation. The Algebra 2 EOC cut was not changed.

- The Commissioner's recommendations were the culmination of a multi-step process of setting cut scores that is the industry-standard, and has been used in Florida, at minimum, six separate times since 1998. The process:
 - Involved the input of over 300 educators, making judgments based primarily on content;
 - Involved the input of a reactor panel composed of K-12 and postsecondary educators and leaders, business leaders, and community leaders; and
 - Involved the input of the public through three rule development workshops and other avenues for input
- Selecting cut points to "fall within 10 points of NAEP" is outside this process; ignoring the work and input of all participants in the multi-step, industry-standard process that has served Florida well today and in the past.
- For example, using cut scores that "fall within 10 points of NAEP" would result in a little over one-third (36%) of students meeting the graduation requirement for Grade 10 English language arts, compared to over one-half (51%) meeting the requirement under the Commissioner's recommendation.
- The Commissioner's recommendation was grounded in the work of the various committees, which made their judgments based primarily on content – specifically, what does a student need to do in order to demonstrate satisfactory performance. For Grade 10 ELA, that resulted in 51 percent of students meeting the standard.
- Aligning arbitrarily to NAEP Proficiency, without taking into account content, would deny an additional 15 percent of students (a 36 percent pass rate compared to 51 percent pass rate) from meeting the graduation threshold, even though the content experts deemed the students did what was needed to demonstrate satisfactory performance and pass the Grade 10 ELA assessment.
- Florida does not have the legal flexibility to establish a lower passing score for graduation below Level 3 (satisfactory), nor is that the right thing to do.