



**Guide to the
2011
Prairie State
Achievement
Examination**

Illinois State Board of Education

The Prairie State Achievement Examination (PSAE) measures student achievement relative to the Illinois Learning Standards. It recognizes the excellent achievement of individual students whose scores qualify them for honors, and it measures the progress that schools have made in helping their students meet the Illinois Learning Standards.

The PSAE is comprised of the ACT® Plus Writing, WorkKeys® tests in reading and mathematics, and a science test developed by the Illinois State Board of Education with the assistance of Illinois teachers. All eligible grade 11 students, as defined by the ISBE Rule* adopted in January 2011, took the PSAE in April/May 2011.

Reports Sent to Schools and Districts

Students' home schools receive a School Performance Profile report, a School Roster of Individual Student Results report that provides results for all tested subject areas, two copies of the Individual Student Report for each tested student, and a student data file on CD that contains results for all tested students. PSAE transcript labels and Prairie State Achievement Award certificates are also included with the reports sent to home schools in the fall.

Students' home schools also receive an Illinois State Goals School Report and two copies of the Illinois State Goals Student Report for each student who tested.

Students' home districts receive a District Performance Profile report, a District Roster of School Results report that provides results for all tested subject areas for all schools in the district, and a copy of the School Performance Profile report for each high school in the district. Districts that have more than one high school receive the student data files for their schools on CD.

One copy of the PSAE Individual Student Report will be sent to the student's testing school if it is different from the student's home high school.

All summary data in these reports include all students who tested, regardless of their enrollment date.

Performance Profile Reports

Performance Profile reports show a summary of student scores for the school, district, and state (only district and state results are displayed in a District Performance Profile). Results are also displayed by gender, race/ethnicity, income level, English language proficiency, disability (IEP only), and migrant status.

The first page of the Performance Profile reports presents a summary of the percent of student scale scores in each of four levels of achievement relative to the Illinois Learning Standards. The four performance levels are

described at the top of page 1 of the report and in Table 1 on page 3 of this guide. For each tested subject area, PSAE scores range from 120–200. The numeric cut scores on the 120-to-200 point scale follow in Table 2 (see page 4 of this guide). In reading, for example, a student must obtain a scale score of 155 or higher to achieve the “Meets Standards” level and a scale score of 178 or higher to achieve the “Exceeds Standards” level. These cut scores, which for reading, mathematics, and science are based on standard setting conducted after the first administration of the PSAE in spring 2001 and for writing are based on standard setting conducted after the administration of the PSAE writing test in spring 2007, do not change from administration to administration. However, the percent of student scores that fall at each level may shift over time.

Also on page 1 of this report are the average scores for each of the four tested subject areas. The reading and mathematics sections show average PSAE scores and average ACT and WorkKeys scores for these subject areas. The science section shows average PSAE Science, ACT Science, and ISBE-Developed Science scores. The ISBE-Developed Science scores include a total score and four subscores. The writing section shows average PSAE Writing scores and average ACT English and Writing scores.

The other two pages of the Performance Profile reports present scores for reading, mathematics, science, and writing by each of 17 demographic subgroups. These pages identify, for all students and for each separate subgroup, the percent of student scores in each of the four performance levels. As with the summary on page 1, results are shown for the school, district, and state (only district and state results are displayed in a District Performance Profile). This information can be used to identify areas of strength and areas needing improvement.

District Roster Report

The District Roster of School Results report provides the following results for each tested subject area for each high school in the district, for all students: the number of student scores and the percent of student scores in each of four performance levels.

School Roster Report

The School Roster of Individual Student Results report provides results for all tested subject areas: reading, mathematics, science, and writing. This report lists each tested student's name, state student ID number, date of birth, school and district enrollment status, and performance level and school percentile rank for each tested subject area. In addition, students' PSAE scores, Day 1 (ACT Plus Writing) scores, and Day 2 scores are provided.

* The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) has amended its rules governing the State Assessment to define “grade 11” for the purpose of administering the Prairie State Achievement Examination (PSAE) or the Illinois Alternative Assessment (IAA). The text of the revised rule is presented below. This rule became effective on January 20, 2011.

Section 1.30(b)(4) Districts shall administer the Prairie State Achievement Examination (PSAE) or

the Illinois Alternate Assessment (IAA), if applicable under subsection (d) of this Section, to students in grade 11. (See Section 2-3.64 of the School Code.) For the purpose of this subsection (b)(4), “grade 11” means the point in time when a student has earned the number of credits necessary for enrollment in grade 11, as determined by his or her school district in accordance with Sections 1.420(b) and 1.440 of this Part. A district shall not promote a student to grade 12 status until that student has taken either the PSAE or IAA, as applicable.

Individual Student Report

The Individual Student Report helps students, parents or guardians, and teachers understand a student's strengths and weaknesses in each tested subject area. The report also compares each student's achievement to that of other students in the school, district, and state.

The first page of the Individual Student Report provides information concerning the student's performance on the PSAE. This page identifies the student (by name, grade, date of birth, and state student ID), the student's home school and home district, the test date (i.e., administration and year) for which the results are reported, and the date of the report. For each tested subject area, the student's PSAE scale score, performance level, and school, district, and state percentile ranks are provided. The four performance levels referenced are defined at the top of page 1 of the report and in Table 1 on page 3 of this guide.

The next two pages of the report provide additional information about the student's performance on the PSAE reading, mathematics, science, and writing tests and on each component test that is taken as part of the PSAE. The PSAE Reading Test includes the ACT Reading and the WorkKeys *Reading for Information* tests; the PSAE Mathematics Test includes the ACT Mathematics and the WorkKeys *Applied Mathematics* tests; the PSAE Science Test includes the ACT Science and the ISBE-Developed Science tests; and the PSAE Writing Test includes the ACT English and ACT Writing tests.

Chart A on page 2 of the report shows the scale score range for each PSAE test (120–200), the student's PSAE scale score for each test, and average scale scores for the school, district, and state. This chart also shows scale score ranges and scale scores for each of the two component tests that are part of a PSAE test.

Chart B at the bottom of page 2 of the report shows (1) the student's PSAE scores and performance levels and (2) the percent of scores in each of the four performance levels at the school, district, and state levels.

Chart C on page 3 of the report shows the student's scores and performance levels compared with the approximate range scored by the middle half (50%) of students in the school, district, and state (represented by a horizontal bar). If a student's score (represented by a diamond) falls to the right of the bar, it means the student scored in the top 25% of the corresponding reference group (school, district, or state). If a student's score falls to the left of the bar, it means the student scored in the bottom 25%.

Chart D at the bottom of page 3 of the report shows a bar graph display of the student's scores and performance levels compared with averages for students in the school, district, and state.

Blanks or NAs may appear on reports for individual students. If an NA appears instead of a score, it means the student was present to test but the score is not available. This can happen for one of three reasons: the student did not answer enough questions for the score to be generated, the student's answer document was voided (e.g., for prohibited behavior or because the test was not administered properly), or for Day 1 only, NAs will appear if ACT college-reportable scores were not earned. If a student was not present to test, a blank will appear instead of a score.

Transcript Labels

A transcript label is provided for each student who appears on the School Roster. The label identifies the student (by name, date of birth, and state student ID), the student's home school, and the student's home district. A scale score will be listed for each subject in which a score was earned. An asterisk and corresponding note appear if the student achieved the "Exceeds Standards" performance level in that particular subject area. NA will appear in a score position if a score was not earned. PSAE scores are required to be entered on the student's transcript.

Prairie State Achievement Award Certificates

A Prairie State Achievement Award Certificate is provided for each student who achieved the "Exceeds Standards" performance level in at least one PSAE subject area. The certificate will contain the student's name and the applicable subject area(s) in which the student achieved the "Exceeds Standards" performance level. All Prairie State Achievement Awards earned are required to be entered on the student's transcript.

ACT, WorkKeys, and ISBE Science Scale Scores Compared to PSAE Scale Scores

PSAE score reports provide separate ACT scale scores for PSAE Day 1 and WorkKeys and science scale scores for PSAE Day 2. The overall PSAE scale score for each subject area is computed separately, based on raw score data. For this reason, students whose PSAE Day 1 scale scores and WorkKeys and science scale scores appear the same may have different PSAE scale scores.

An example from 2011 is as follows: Two students each earned an ACT Mathematics scale score of 18 and a WorkKeys *Applied Mathematics* scale score of 5. One earned an overall PSAE Mathematics scale score of 155 (Below Standards) and the other earned an overall PSAE Mathematics scale score of 156 (Meets Standards). This is possible because the separate Day 1 and Day 2 scale scores are not used in the computation of the overall PSAE scale score. Students who miss more or fewer items can each have an ACT Mathematics scale score of 18; one is a "high 18" and one is a "low 18" but this distinction is not inherently visible in the reporting of this separate scale score.

Illinois State Goals Reports

The Illinois State Goals reports provide information about students' PSAE performance by State Goal in English Language Arts (Reading and Writing), Mathematics, and Science. The reports include only grade 11 student data.

The Illinois State Goals **School** report lists the school and district name and shows the distribution of student performance at the school level for each State Goal. The first page of the **School** report provides the number or range of number of test items for each State Goal and the average percent correct for the school, the district, and the state. The second page of the School report provides a description of each State Goal and the component tests that contribute to each of the four PSAE subject scores.

The Illinois State Goals **Student** report lists the student's name, home school, and home district and provides information regarding individual student performance. The **Student** report helps students, parents or guardians, and teachers understand a student's strengths and weaknesses relative to the Illinois State Goals assessed by the PSAE. The first page of the **Student** report shows (1) the total number of essay points and/or test questions on the PSAE based on each State Goal, (2) the number of essay points received and/or test questions a student answered correctly for each State Goal, and (3) the number of essay points and/or test questions a typical student who performed at the "Meets Standards" level received and/or answered correctly. The second page of the report provides additional explanation to help in interpreting student results.

Spring 2011 Results

School and district reports present statewide results for comparative purposes. This guide provides statewide results that may be useful in interpreting the reports.

Figure 1 (see page 4) shows student performance statewide relative to the Illinois Learning Standards across assessed subject areas. Table 2 shows the scale score ranges for the four PSAE performance levels and the five subject areas that were assessed 2001 through 2004. Due to a July 2004 change in state law, PSAE tests administered in 2005 and 2006 assessed reading, mathematics, and science only. Beginning in 2007, writing was assessed again. Table 3 (see page 5) shows the statewide percent of student scores at each of these performance levels for 2011 as well as for 2001 through 2010. Also, Table 3 shows the percent of student scores that met or exceeded standards.

Availability of PSAE Student Data and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

All student PSAE data are available through ISBE's secure IWAS system via the Student Information System—Statewide link. PSAE reports contain data for all students who tested, regardless of their enrollment date. AYP performance calculations consider only assessment scores achieved by students who enrolled on or before May 1, 2010, and also include scores for students who were assessed with the Illinois Alternate Assessment (IAA).

Table 1
PSAE Performance Level Descriptions

Performance Level	Description
Exceeds Standards	Student work demonstrates advanced knowledge and skills in the subject. Students creatively apply knowledge and skills to solve problems and evaluate the results.
Meets Standards	Student work demonstrates proficient knowledge and skills in the subject. Students effectively apply knowledge and skills to solve problems.
Below Standards	Student work demonstrates basic knowledge and skills in the subject. However, because of gaps in learning, students apply knowledge and skills in limited ways.
Academic Warning	Student work demonstrates limited knowledge and skills in the subject. Because of major gaps in learning, students apply knowledge and skills ineffectively.

Figure 1

**Statewide Percent of Student PSAE Scores in Each Performance Level (All Students)
Spring 2011 Administration**

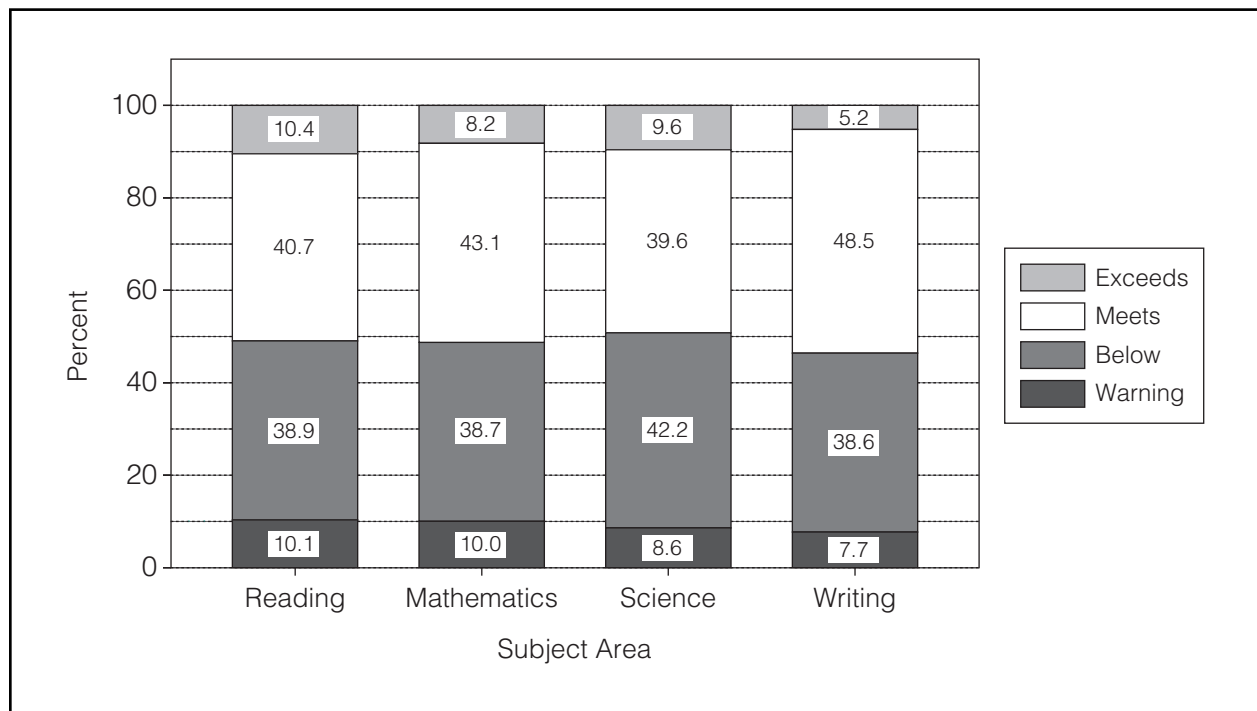


Table 2
Scale Score Ranges That Define PSAE Performance Levels

Subject	Academic Warning	Below Standards	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards
READING	120–134	135–154	155–177	178–200
MATHEMATICS	120–135	136–155	156–178	179–200
SCIENCE	120–135	136–157	158–177	178–200
WRITING ^a	120–130	131–155	156–182	183–200
WRITING ^b	120–132	133–154	155–178	179–200
SOCIAL SCIENCE ^b	120–136	137–153	154–173	174–200

^a Due to a 2005 change in state law, this subject was assessed beginning in 2007 using a different PSAE test than was given 2001 through 2004.

^b This subject was assessed 2001 through 2004. Due to a July 2004 change in state law, the 2005 and 2006 PSAE assessed reading, mathematics, and science only.

Table 3**Statewide Percent of Student PSAE Scores in Each Performance Level (All Grade 11 Students)**

Subject	Academic Warning	Below Standards	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards	Meets + Exceeds Standards ^c
READING					
2001	8	34	46	12	58
2002	8.0	33.9	45.2	13.0	58.2
2003	7.5	36.1	44.8	11.6	56.4
2004	8.2	35.0	46.8	10.0	56.8
2005	7.9	32.6	46.4	13.1	59.5
2006	8.4	33.2	44.4	14.0	58.4
2007	8.4	37.5	43.1	10.9	54.1
2008	10.1	36.6	42.9	10.4	53.3
2009	8.5	34.6	45.0	11.9	56.9
2010	9.0	37.0	44.1	9.9	54.0
2011	10.1	38.9	40.7	10.4	51.0
MATHEMATICS					
2001	9	37	45	9	54
2002	10.0	36.4	45.2	8.4	53.6
2003	9.5	37.2	46.6	6.7	53.3
2004	9.7	37.1	42.8	10.3	53.1
2005	9.8	37.4	45.6	7.2	52.8
2006	9.8	36.6	45.8	7.9	53.6
2007	9.8	37.5	42.8	9.9	52.7
2008	11.1	35.9	42.2	10.8	53.0
2009	11.0	37.4	42.2	9.4	51.6
2010	10.6	36.7	42.4	10.3	52.7
2011	10.0	38.7	43.1	8.2	51.3
SCIENCE					
2001	12	38	39	11	50
2002	10.6	36.6	41.1	11.7	52.8
2003	10.7	38.0	40.0	11.3	51.3
2004	10.6	36.5	41.0	11.9	52.9
2005	10.2	37.3	41.4	11.1	52.5
2006	8.3	40.9	40.1	10.7	50.8
2007	8.7	40.3	40.3	10.7	51.0
2008	9.5	39.3	40.4	10.8	51.2
2009	8.9	40.7	40.3	10.2	50.5
2010	9.7	37.9	41.6	10.8	52.4
2011	8.6	42.2	39.6	9.6	49.2
WRITING ^a					
2007	6.7	36.3	51.1	5.8	57.0
2008	6.7	37.3	50.0	6.0	56.0
2009	6.0	37.2	51.7	5.1	56.8
2010	6.6	38.1	49.8	5.5	55.3
2011	7.7	38.6	48.5	5.2	53.7
WRITING ^b					
2001	6	35	50	9	59
2002	6.4	34.1	49.5	10.0	59.5
2003	6.3	34.8	49.5	9.4	58.9
2004	7.3	33.1	47.7	11.9	59.6
SOCIAL SCIENCE ^b					
2001	9	33	43	15	58
2002	7.1	36.1	42.7	14.0	56.7
2003	8.0	35.8	41.7	14.5	56.2
2004	7.7	32.9	44.9	14.5	59.4

^a Due to a 2005 change in state law, this subject was assessed beginning in 2007 using a different PSAE test than was given 2001 through 2004.

^b This subject was assessed 2001 through 2004. Due to a July 2004 change in state law, the 2005 and 2006 PSAE assessed reading, mathematics, and science only.

^c Due to rounding, the percents in the Meets + Exceeds Standards column may not equal the sum of the previous two columns.