

→ PARENT GUIDE TO THE LEAP CONNECT ASSESSMENTS ←

As schools and students begin their final preparations for the LEAP Connect assessments for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities, the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) created this fact sheet to provide parents with general information about the tests, and what you and your child can expect when taking the tests.



KNOW THE TEST

LEAP CONNECT ASSESSMENTS

Louisiana has built an educational system that ensures all students are ready for the next level of study by building knowledge of the world, accessing meaningful texts, expressing ideas, and solving complex problems. Through this, the LDOE has created an equitable system for students with significant cognitive disabilities which includes:

- ✓ the Louisiana Connectors (LCs) for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities in English language arts (ELA), mathematics, and science that establish high expectations for students with significant cognitive disabilities, with instructional resources for educators;
- ✓ alternate assessments (LEAP Connect) in ELA, mathematics, and science aligned to the LCs to measure student progress; and
- ✓ an established graduation pathway to a high school diploma for students assessed on the alternate assessments.

Federal law requires states to administer annual assessments to all students, including students with significant cognitive disabilities, to measure progress towards challenging academic content standards. The LEAP Connect assessments measure student proficiency in the content and skills detailed by the Louisiana Connectors (LCs) for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities. The LCs represent the “big ideas” of the content and skills found in the Louisiana Student Standards. The LEAP Connect format allows students to participate in academic assessments that are sensitive to measuring progress in their learning (see R.S.17:24.4(F)(3) and R.S.17:183.1-17:183.3).

LEAP CONNECT DESIGN

The LEAP Connect assessments align to the ELA, mathematics, and science Connectors for students with significant cognitive disabilities, which identify the:

- ✓ most salient grade-level academic content found in the Louisiana Student Standards for ELA, mathematics, and science; and
- ✓ core content knowledge and skills needed at each grade to provide success at the next.

The assessments include items with multiple levels of complexity and varying degrees of scaffolds and supports to provide opportunities for students to show what they know and can do. The LEAP Connect assessment items each represent one of four levels of complexity (Tiers 1-4), designed to follow instructional practices. Tier 1 and Tier 2 questions reflect the higher level of support needed when students begin to learn a new skill or acquire new knowledge. Tier 3 and Tier 4 questions reflect the lower level of support needed as students learn and develop mastery of that skill or knowledge.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible to participate in the LEAP Connect assessments, an IEP team must verify that the student has a disability which significantly impacts cognitive functioning and meets the criteria outlined in Bulletin 1530 §505. Eligible students will take the LEAP Connect assessments for ELA and mathematics each year in grades 3-8 and high school and science in grades 4, 8, and high school as required by Sections 1111(b)(1)(E) and 8401 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

THE LEAP CONNECT ASSESSMENTS ARE DESIGNED TO WORK WITH THE WAY YOUR STUDENT COMMUNICATES. BUILT-IN SUPPORTS INCLUDE:

- ✓ REDUCED PASSAGE LENGTH IN READING,
- ✓ PICTURES AND GRAPHICS TO HELP STUDENTS UNDERSTAND,
- ✓ MODELS IN READING, WRITING AND MATHEMATICS,
- ✓ COMMON GEOMETRIC SHAPES AND SMALLER NUMBERS ON THE MATHEMATICS TEST,
- ✓ ANSWER OPTIONS AVAILABLE FOR USE WITH ALTERNATIVE COMMUNICATION DEVICES,
- ✓ ONE-ON-ONE ADMINISTRATION BY TEACHER OR ANOTHER TRAINED STAFF MEMBER, AND
- ✓ ANY ADDITIONAL ACCOMMODATIONS AS DESCRIBED IN THE STUDENT'S IEP.



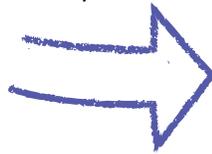
ONLINE TESTING SCHEDULE: FEBRUARY 19-MARCH 22, 2024

Schools determine the schedule for administering the on-line tests during this window based on a student's needs and abilities; therefore, testing days will vary by student.

TEST RESULTS

Schools and school systems will receive individual student reports in May. Each school system will decide how to share this information, but teachers, parents and students will be provided with the scores along with an explanation.

[View the Parent Guide to LEAP Connect Student Reports](#) to learn more about these results and why they matter for your child.



PARENT GUIDE TO THE LEAP CONNECT STUDENT REPORTS

HOW DID MY CHILD PERFORM ON THE LEAP CONNECT ASSESSMENTS THIS YEAR?

Student performance on the LEAP Connect assessments is reported by achievement level and overall score. Achievement Level Descriptors (ALDs) are also included and describe the knowledge and skills a student generally demonstrates at each level.

HOW SHOULD I USE THESE RESULTS?

As a parent, you can use the test results to guide a discussion with your child's teacher(s) about additional supports that may be needed in class and at home.

HERE ARE SOME SUGGESTED QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN DISCUSSING THE RESULTS WITH YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER(S):

- Where is my child doing well and where do they need improvement?
- What can be done in the classroom to help them improve?
- How can I help support my child's learning at home?
- How do we ensure that my child continues to progress?

FOR ADDITIONAL TOOLS AND RESOURCES TO HELP YOU SUPPORT STUDENT LEARNING AT HOME, visit the Family Support Toolbox at:

<https://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/family-support-toolbox/>

LEAP Connect Achievement Level Descriptors for English Language Arts Grades 3-8 and High School: <https://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/assessment/leap-connect-achievement-level-descriptors-for-english-language-arts-grades-3-8-and-high-school.pdf>

LEAP Connect Achievement Level Descriptors for Mathematics Grades 3-8 and High School: <https://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/assessment/leap-connect-achievement-level-descriptors-for-mathematics-grades-3-8-and-high-school.pdf>

LEAP Connect Achievement Level Descriptors for Science Grade 4, Grade 8 and High School: <https://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/assessment/leap-connect-achievement-level-descriptors-for-science-grade-4-grade-8-and-high-school.pdf>

LA Connectors for Students with Significant Disabilities: <https://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/assessment/leap-connect-achievement-level-descriptors-for-students-with-significant-disabilities.pdf>

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PREPARE FOR THE TEST

KNOW WHAT YOUR CHILD IS LEARNING

You can help your child prepare for the LEAP Connect assessments by:

- Reinforcing skills that are targeted on your child's IEP
- Consulting with your child's teacher to determine which LA Connectors are being addressed in classroom instruction

By understanding what your child should know and be able to do this year, you will be better positioned to help your child connect the dots between classroom learning and the assessment.

USEFUL LINKS

- [LA Connectors for Students with Significant Disabilities](#)
- [Louisiana Connectors Parent Guide](#)
- [Louisiana's Educational Rights of Children with Disabilities](#)
- [Resources for Parents of Students with Disabilities](#)
- [Parent Guide to LEAP Connect Student Reports](#)



FOR ONLINE ACCESS TO ALL ASSESSMENT RESOURCES, visit the [Family Support Toolbox](#).

For more information about this or any other statewide assessment, talk to your child's principal or teacher, or email the Department at assessment@la.gov.

