



MEASURING STUDENT LEARNING IN 2021: What will be Different in Alaska?

Since COVID-19 first led to sudden school closures in 2020, families have stepped up in unprecedented ways to support learning at home as students began learning remotely. Teachers and leaders have worked hard to put plans in place to ensure students are safe, offering students across Alaska different learning models—remote, hybrid and in-person, with some school districts transitioning between them as circumstances demanded. But the unprecedented changes in learning have impacted students in many ways, from their relationships with peers and social emotional growth to academics.

This year, it is more important than ever to measure student learning to understand the impact that COVID-19 and different learning models have had on students. This is especially important for families, who need objective information about how well their child learned grade-level skills so they can better support learning at home. To measure learning, students will take state tests this spring. While state tests are only one of many ways to measure student learning, families, schools and leaders need the objective and actionable information the state test provides to identify any learning gaps to best support students and fully recover from the pandemic.

How will State Tests be Different in 2021?

Knowing that the pandemic has deeply affected students, teachers and schools, the state tests will be different than it has been in the past. The results will be used for learning purposes only in 2021. As of March 2021, the following changes have been made:

- **To reduce stress for teachers and students in an already challenging year, the results from the results from the PEAKS test will not be used to rate schools or districts as they have in the past.**
- **Since students have missed so much in-person class time this year, schools will have flexibility in scheduling the test to reduce the impact on class time. They may also test students in smaller groups over more days to allow for social distancing.**

For the most recent information on the 2021 PEAKS, visit Education.Alaska.gov/Assessments/PEAKS