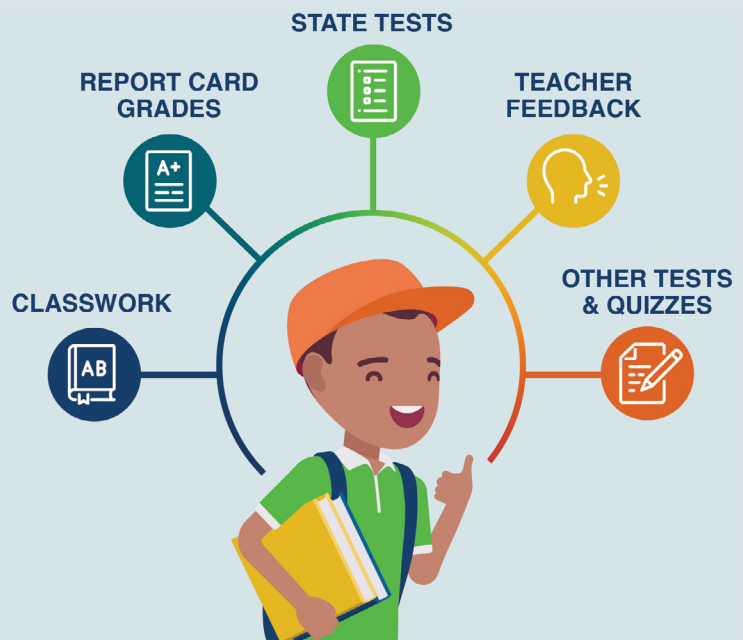




A FAMILY GUIDE TO ANNUAL STATE TESTS IN HAWAII: One of Many Measures of Student Learning

There are many ways to measure academic performance, and annual state tests are only one of them. These tests are not meant to tell the whole story. They are meant to be combined with other measures, including teacher feedback, classwork and projects, and report card grades. Together, these measures can give families a more complete picture of a student's performance so they can better support learning at home and advocate for their child.



State Assessments 101

The Every Student Succeeds Act or ESSA, requires students to take state tests in reading and math every year in third through eighth grade and once in high school. In Hawai'i, students in third through eighth and 11th grade take the Smarter Balanced test in English language arts and math. Students in fifth and eighth grade also take a state science test.

A Focus on Grade Level Skills

Unlike other tests, Smarter Balanced is focused on grade level material and is aligned to the state standards. The test questions match what students do and learn in the classroom every day throughout the year, which are the skills that are most important for students to learn in order to move on to more challenging content.

Smarter Balanced is taken online and is computer-adaptive, which means it adjusts the difficulty of the questions based on the student's responses. The test includes a variety of different types of questions, including problems that ask students to show and explain their answers, write well developed essays and analyze text. Hawai'i teachers have worked closely with the state to write and review test questions.

Grade 6: Math

Ben's Game World is having a sale on video games. The store is offering a sale pack of 4 video games for \$43.80. What is the unit price of a video game in the sale pack?

\$

Roberto's Electronics is also having a sale on video games. The unit price of any video game at Roberto's Electronics is the same as the unit price of a video game in the sale pack at Ben's Game World. How much would it cost a customer for 7 video games at Roberto's Electronics?

\$

Grade 3: ELA

Your class has been learning about different types of jobs to prepare for your school's job week. Your teacher has asked each person to learn about a different job. You think being an astronaut must be an interesting job so you decide to learn about what it is like to be an astronaut. You have found two sources about being an astronaut.

After you have reviewed these sources, you will answer some questions about them. Briefly scan the sources and the questions that follow.

Click on the boxes to match each source with the idea or ideas that it supports. Some ideas may have more than one source selected.

	Source #1: What is an Astronaut?	Source #2: Life in Space
Astronauts feel weak when they come back from space.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Since objects are also able to float in space, astronauts can easily lift things in space that are heavy on Earth.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Astronauts have a special view of Earth from space.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Useful Information for All

FAMILIES: Understanding Grade Level Performance

The Smarter Balanced report gives families information on how well their child performed on different sets of skills in each subject. Families can use this information to identify where their child is doing well and where they may need support or practice. This helps families better support learning at home. It can also help them to start meaningful conversations with teachers, set goals for each student's areas of improvement and identify resources and strategies that can be used at home and in school to help students make progress.

Questions to Ask the Teacher about Your Child's Smarter Balanced Report:

- What does this mean about my child's learning?
- Is my child on grade level?
- Where does my child need more support or improvement?
- What short-term learning goals should my child meet to show progress?
- How can I support learning at home?



TEACHERS: Informing Instruction

Students take different types of tests throughout the school year. Some students take benchmark or diagnostic tests, such as MAP Growth, Smarter Balanced interims, i-Ready or STAR. These are taken several times a year and measure mastery of important concepts and skills in reading and math. Students take a test at the beginning of the year to identify their “starting point” and again throughout the year to measure their progress. Benchmark tests help teachers identify and address learning gaps early on so students can stay on track to meet grade level expectations. While Smarter Balanced is only given at the end of the school year, it is one way of showing how much progress students made from the beginning of the year and how well they met grade level expectations.

While teachers use Smarter Balanced results to understand each student's unique needs and support them in the areas where they need extra help, the results also help teachers to improve their instruction. They can use the results to look for trends in their students' learning to see what skills or concepts students learned and what content they struggled with. This helps teachers identify what they taught effectively and where they need to improve or change their instructional strategies.

SCHOOL & DISTRICT LEADERS: Informing Decisions

Smarter Balanced results are critical for school and district leaders to make informed decisions about schools and students. School and district level test scores show leaders how students across a school or district are performing and indicate if a certain group of students or schools need more support. This allows them to target additional support or resources to help those schools improve. District leaders can also use Smarter Balanced scores to understand what strategies and changes are working.



STATE LEADERS: Helping Schools Improve

State leaders use Smarter Balanced results to identify schools and districts that need more support and resources. They identify the schools with the lowest performance in the state, as well as schools with certain groups of students that performed much lower on the test than the rest of the students in that school. These schools receive additional funding and resources from the state to support students and teachers. For example, schools may hire more teachers or tutors or they may purchase additional instructional materials and programs, depending on the needs of their students.

Where Can I Go for More Information?

- For more information and answers to frequently asked questions, visit HawaiiPublicSchools.org/TeachingAndLearning/Testing/StateAssessment/Pages/Family-Report.aspx
- To see a sample score report and for resources to support learning at home, visit HI.StartingSmarter.org/
- To see a practice test, visit SmarterBalanced.AlohaHSAP.org/Users/Students.shtml
- For ideas on how to support your child's learning at home, visit PTA.org/FamilyGuides
- For more information about the Hawai'i PTA visit HawaiiStatePTSA.org/

