

Parents' Guide to Periodic Assessments 2008-09

Students take "Periodic Assessments" throughout the school year to give educators and families more information about what students have learned and the academic areas in which they need more help. Periodic Assessments differ from other types of assessments, like New York State Tests or Regents Exams, because they provide information used for teaching rather than for grading students' performance. The Department of Education does not use Periodic Assessment results to evaluate students or schools.

Schools have access to a variety of Periodic Assessment tools. Assessment tools include the assessments themselves, online reports to help teachers analyze student results, instructional resources for teachers, and practice materials for students. Teachers use the assessment tools in a variety of ways to address areas where students need more help or where students are ready for new challenges.

Elementary and middle schools give Periodic Assessments in both English Language Arts (ELA) and math in grades 3-8. High schools give Periodic Assessments in English and Integrated Algebra to students who have not yet passed Regents Exams in those subjects. Teachers in grades K-2 also use assessments to track students' beginning reading skills.

What are the different types of Periodic Assessments?

The DOE offers several assessment options for English and math in all grades. Schools can choose the combination of Periodic Assessments that best meet their students' learning needs, or they can design their own assessments. Options include:

- Assessments that predict student performance on New York State tests so that students and teachers know how much work they need to do to meet State Learning Standards and where to focus their efforts.
- Assessments that measure how well students have learned information recently covered in class to help teachers plan instructional next steps.
- Computer-based assessments that change depending on the answers students give, so they can provide precise information about individual students' strengths and areas for improvement.
- Other options include English Language Learner Assessments and custom assessments that teachers can create at any time for a variety of purposes.

For more information, please visit www.nyc.gov/schools/Accountability/SchoolReports/PeriodicAssessments.

How can parents see Periodic Assessment results?

- Schools and teachers are encouraged to discuss Periodic Assessments results with parents at parent-teacher conferences and at other times throughout the year.
- Many students will be given a username and password so that they can log in to the Acuity Web site and see their Periodic Assessment results online.
- Every school chooses a Periodic Assessment option that fits its needs, so the details are different from school to school. Teachers and Parent Coordinators can tell you how Periodic Assessments are being used in your school.