



ACAP Summative ELA & Reading Performance Standards

Presented to the Alabama State Board of Education
September 8, 2022

Standards and Assessments



What are standards?

The content students are expected to know by the end of a grade level and subject.

Guideposts for teachers to build their lesson plans and develop “can-do” statements.

They answer: What can students do as a result of learning these standards?



What are large-scale assessments?

They are designed to cover the **depth** (complexity) and **breadth** (scope) of the standards across a year.

They provide large grain-size information on how student performance compares to end-of-grade level expectations.

Assessments and Performance Expectations



There is a lot of content to cover in an assessment based on the breadth and depth of the state's standards.



How much content is enough to say students are *on track to meet college- and career-ready expectations*?



Setting **performance expectations** (i.e., standard setting) requires expert judgment from teachers of the content to determine what content represents performance in Level 1, Level 2, Level 3, or Level 4.

The Role of Performance Level Descriptors

Content standards define what students should know and be able to do *at the end of each grade level*.

Performance level descriptors (PLDs) define what students should know and be able to do *at each performance level by grade*.

During standard setting, participants use PLDs to help them make expert judgments about what students know and should do *on the test by grade*.

ACAP Summative Grade 3 ELA and Reading

The ACAP Summative test of grade 3 ELA is used for two purposes:

- Students' performances on the entire test are categorized into four performance levels based on their ELA **proficiency**
- Students' performances on the reading portion of the test are categorized into two performance levels based on their reading **sufficiency**

Proficiency vs. Sufficiency

Proficiency refers to how well students perform on an assessment.

- Specifically, proficiency refers to the level of knowledge and skills a student demonstrates given their performance on an assessment.
- For ACAP Summative, proficiency refers to a student's performance on the ELA assessment.

Sufficiency refers to whether the performance is high enough to be considered at or above grade level.

- For ACAP Summative, sufficiency refers to the reading portion of the ELA assessment.

ELA Proficiency vs. Reading Sufficiency

Policy statements for ELA, referring to the state ELA content standards:

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
The student has a minimal understanding of grade-level standards and is likely to need additional support at this level of learning as described in the Alabama Course of Study.	The student has a partial understanding of grade-level standards and is likely to need some additional support at this level of learning as described in the Alabama Course of Study.	The student has a strong understanding of grade-level standards and demonstrates the knowledge and skills at this level of learning as described in the Alabama Course of Study.	The student has an advanced understanding of grade-level standards and exceeding demonstrates the knowledge and skills at this level of learning as described in the Alabama Course of Study.

Policy statements for reading, referring specifically to on-grade reading skills:

Below Grade Level	At or Above Grade Level
Students in this level need support to meet the reading requirement in grade 3. They typically have partial understanding of the current grade's reading content standards and are building the skills needed to read at grade-level.	Students in this level meet the reading requirement in grade 3. They have sufficient understanding of the current grade's reading content standards and are reading at grade level in grade 3.

Standard Setting Workshops

At **standard setting** workshops, Alabama educators studied the knowledge and skills of students in each performance level.

They used **performance level descriptors** to guide their discussions.

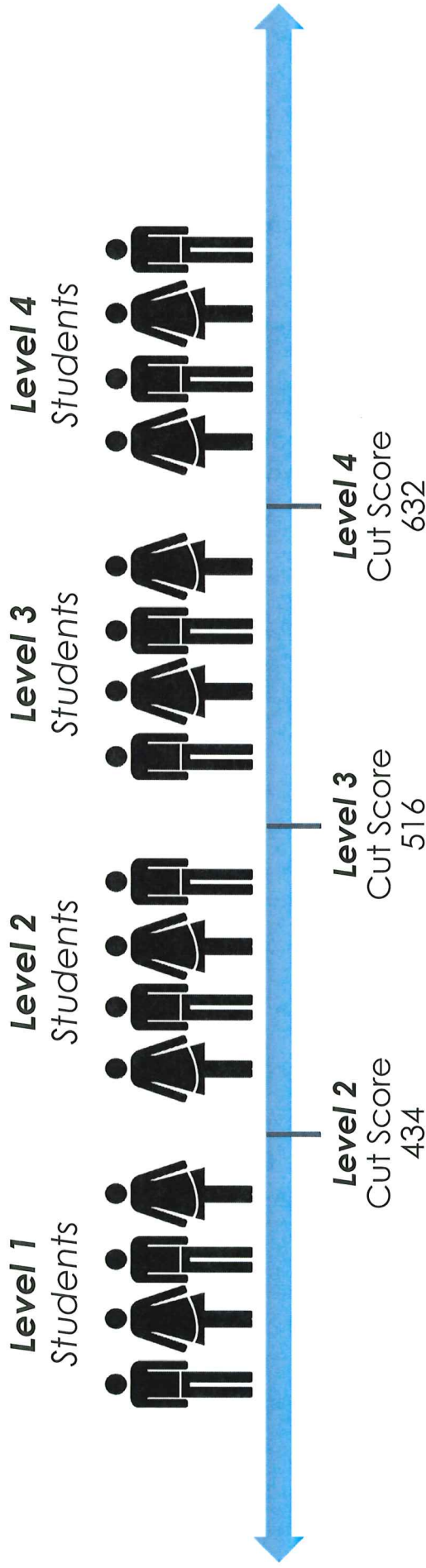
Then they studied the test items. Using the Yes/No Angoff procedure, they considered whether students in each performance level would be expected to answer each item correctly.

In July 2021, a committee of 12 educators recommended cut scores for ELA, then for reading.

Alabama Comprehensive Assessment Program (ACAP) English Language Arts PLDs				
Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs)				
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Reading	The student has a minimal understanding of grade-level standards and is likely to need additional support at this level of learning as described in the Alabama Course of Study.	The student has a partial understanding of grade-level standards and is likely to need some additional support at this level of learning as described in the Alabama Course of Study.	The student has a strong understanding of grade-level standards and demonstrates the knowledge and skills at this level of learning as described in the Alabama Course of Study.	The student has an advanced understanding of grade-level standards and exceeds the knowledge and skills at this level of learning as described in the Alabama Course of Study.
Reading	A student at this level	A student at this level	A student at this level	A student at this level
• reads and minimally comprehends literature and informational texts in the grade 3 text complexity level.	• reads and partially comprehends literature and informational texts in the grade 3 text complexity level.	• reads and proficiently comprehends literature and informational texts in the grade 3 text complexity level.	• reads and thoroughly comprehends literature and informational texts in the grade 3 text complexity level.	• reads and thoroughly comprehends literature and informational texts in the grade 3 text complexity level.
• attempts to ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.	• asks and answers some questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.	• asks and answers some questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.	• asks and answers complex questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.	• asks and answers complex questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.
• recounts stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determines the main message and how it is conveyed through different media, formats, and technologies.	• recounts stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determines the main message and how it is conveyed through different media, formats, and technologies.	• recounts stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determines the main message and how it is conveyed through different media, formats, and technologies.	• recounts stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determines the main message and how it is conveyed through different media, formats, and technologies.	• recounts stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determines the main message and how it is conveyed through different media, formats, and technologies.

Proficiency for Grade 3 ELA

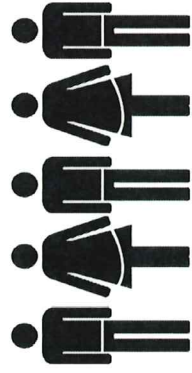
In July 2021, Alabama educators recommended cut scores for grade 3 ELA, and the cut scores were reviewed in June 2022.



Sufficiency for Grade 3 Reading

The cut score for grade 3 reading was recommended by Alabama educators as part of a multi-stage process in school year 2020-2021.

Below Grade Level
Students



At or Above Grade Level
Students



At or Above
Cut Score
452



Adjusting the Cut Scores for Reading

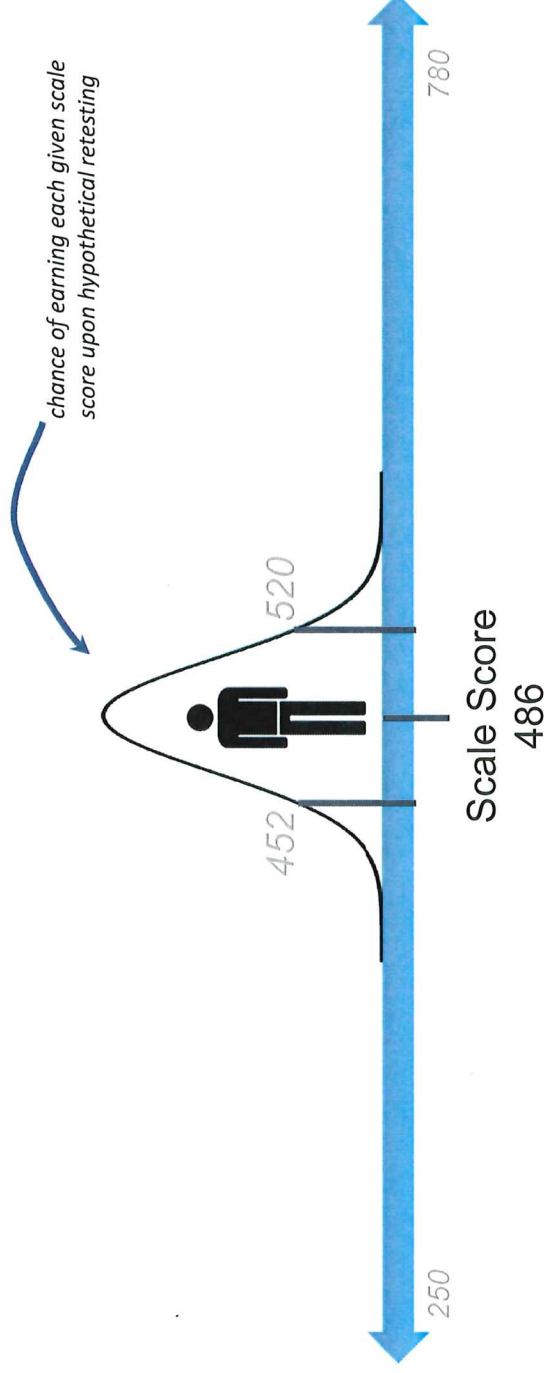
At the standard setting, the median cut score for grade 3 reading recommended by the committee of Alabama educators was 486.

After the standard setting, the ALSDE and TAC recommended an adjustment of two conditional standard error of measurement (CSEM) values, resulting in a cut score for 452.

Conditional Error of Measurement (CSEM)

The CSEM quantifies the amount of statistical precision around any test score.

- If a student took the test many times, the student's test score would likely be a bit different each time. About 95% of the time, the student's test score would likely vary in a range of ± 2 CSEM.



Adjusting the Cut Scores for Reading (cont.)

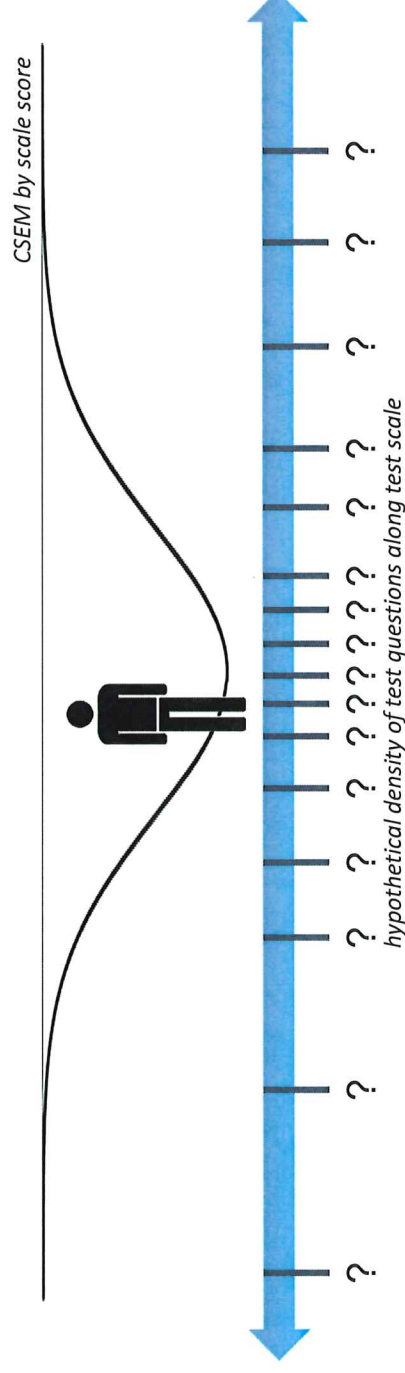
By adjusting the cut score by -2 CSEM, we reduce the chance of misclassifying students who truly have sufficient reading skills.

- If a student scores less than 452, we are 95% confident that the student's reading achievement is truly Below Grade Level.

Adjusting cut scores is very common in standard setting, and this adjustment reflects the stakes associated with the reading cut score.

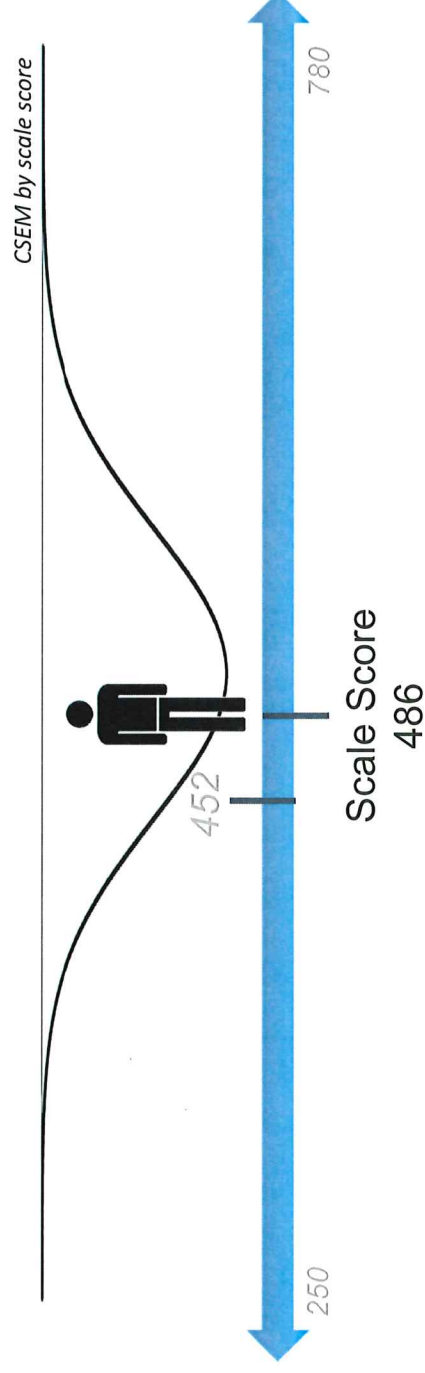
CSEM and Item Response Theory (IRT)

- The CSEM is expressed on the test scale and stems from IRT.
- Unlike SEM from classical test theory, CSEM doesn't directly depend on the number of examinees or the length of the test.
 - CSEM depends on the amount of statistical **information** available for a given ability range on the test. Information depends on the number of items and each item's measurement characteristics (e.g., difficulty, discriminative value).



Size of the CSEM

- CSEM values tend to be lower at the center of the test scale.
- The CSEM value was 17 scale score points (for scale score 486).
 - Using the 2021 operational items, this CSEM is associated with about two raw-score points (out of 29).



Cut Scores Validated in Summer 2022

In May and June 2022, groups of educators and stakeholders convened to:

- Review the cut scores for reading and ELA
- Examine the results of validity studies regarding the cut scores and test scales
- Discuss the performance of Alabama students on the tests in 2022 (vs. 2021)
- Recommend whether the cut scores were still valid for continued use

The committees recommended the cut scores continue to be used on the tests.

Next Steps in School Year 2022-23

The spring 2023 ELA (and reading) tests will be updated to reflect important changes.

- The ELA content standards (including reading) were updated in 2021, and the spring 2023 tests will measure them.
- The reading portions of the tests in grades 2 and 3 will more fully reflect the aspects of reading mentioned in the Alabama Literacy Act.

Accordingly, a new standard setting will be conducted for reading and ELA.

- The existing cut scores will be used as anchor.