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Score Report Interpretation Guide

for Computer-Based and Paper-Based Tests

Spring 2026

NM-MSSA Grades 3–8



**NEW MEXICO MEASURES
OF STUDENT SUCCESS AND
ACHIEVEMENT**

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Note: This manual is available online at <https://newmexico.onlinehelp.cognia.org/reporting-resources/>.



Content and Copyright Information

This manual was developed by Cognia™ under a contract with the New Mexico Public Education Department (PED) to develop, administer, score, and create reports for the New Mexico Measures of Student Success and Achievement. While the PED has reviewed this manual and posted it on its website, Cognia is responsible for the editorial and technical content.

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1.0 General Information for Families and Educators

1.1 Background

The New Mexico Measures of Student Success and Achievement (NM-MSSA) is the summative assessment in Language Arts, and Mathematics for students in grades 3–8 aligned to the New Mexico Common Core State Standards (NMCCSS) for math and language arts. The assessment measures a student’s grade level proficiency and progress toward college and/or career readiness.

The NM-MSSA Spanish Language Arts Assessment for students in grades 3–8 is aligned to the Common Core Español Standards for Language Arts. The assessment measures a student’s grade level proficiency and progress toward college and/or career readiness.

1.2 NM-MSSA

The NM-MSSA is designed to measure whether students are on track to be ready for college or career, as defined by the State, by showing they have mastered the NMCCSS.

The Spring 2026 NM-MSSA assessments were administered in either computer-based or paper-based format. The Reading assessment contained items that focused on understanding key ideas and details, analyzing elements of craft and structure, and integrating knowledge and ideas using informational and literary texts. The Writing and Language assessment contained items that focused on communicating clearly and effectively for a particular task and purpose, determining the meaning of grade-appropriate words, and applying conventions of standard English grammar, usage, and mechanics. The Mathematics assessment focused on understanding and applying skills and concepts, solving multi-step problems that require abstract reasoning, and modeling real-world problems with precision, perseverance, and strategic use of tools. In each content area, students demonstrated their acquired skills and knowledge by answering selected-response items, multi-select selected response items, and extended response items.

1.3 Confidentiality of Reporting Results

Individual student performance results on NM-MSSA assessments are confidential and may be released only in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (20 U.S.C. Section 1232g). Aggregated student performance data are made available to the public and do not contain the names of individual students or teachers.

1.4 Purpose of this Guide

This guide provides information on the individual student reports, school reports, and district reports provided for NM-MSSA assessment results. Section 2.0, which outlines and explains elements of the individual student report, may be shared with families. This section will help families understand their child’s test results. “3.0 Understanding the NM-MSSA School and District Reports” on page 7 outlines and explains elements of the school and district reports. New Mexico state policies and calculations for accountability reporting may differ from the policies and calculations used for assessment reports.

Sample reports included in this guide are for illustration purposes only. They are provided to show the basic layout of the reports and the information they provide. Sample reports do not include actual data from any administration.

2.0 Understanding the NM-MSSA Individual Student Report (ISR)

2.1 Types of Scores on the NM-MSSA ISR

Student performance on NM-MSSA assessments is described on the individual student report using the interim scale scores, performance levels, standard error, and subclaim performance indicators.

2.1.1 Scale Score

A scale score is a numerical value that summarizes student performance. Not all students respond to the same set of test items, so each student's scaled score accounts for the slight differences in difficulty among the various forms and administrations of the test. The resulting scale score allows for an appropriate comparison across test forms and administration years within a grade or course and content area. NM-MSSA reports provide overall scale scores for Language Arts and Mathematics, each of which determines a student's performance level in the respective content area. Scale score ranges differ by grade for all tests.

For example, a student who earns an overall scale score of 800 on one form of the grade 8 Mathematics assessment would be expected to earn an overall scale score of 800 on any other form of the grade 8 Mathematics assessment. Furthermore, the student's overall scale score and level of mastery of concepts and skills would be comparable to a student who took the same assessment the previous year or following year.

2.1.2 Performance Level

Each performance level is a broad, categorical level defined by a student's overall scale score and is used to report overall student performance by describing how well students met the expectations for their grade level/course. Each performance level is defined by a range of overall scale scores for each subject. There are four performance levels for NM-MSSA assessments:

- Level 4: Advanced
- Level 3: Proficient
- Level 2: Nearing Proficiency
- Level 1: Novice

Students who are Proficient or Advanced display mastery of grade-level expectations. They display satisfactory or thorough understanding and use of college- and career-readiness standards.

Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs) describe the knowledge, skills, and practices that students should know and be able to demonstrate at each performance level in each content area (Language Arts and Mathematics), and at each grade level/course.

Web links to the PLDs are listed in ["Appendix B: Performance Level Descriptors"](#) on page 13.

2.1.3 Reporting Category Performance Indicators

Reporting category performance for NM-MSSA assessments is reported to indicate whether the student performed above standard, at/near standard, and below standard in a given reporting category.

2.2 Description of Individual Student Reports

The following pages show examples of student reports. The text below describes what the information represents.

General Information

A *Identification Information*

The ISR lists the student's name, state student ID, date of birth, language in which the student tested, the grade level of the test, the grade level of the student when assessed, the district name, and the school name.

B *Family Letter*

This letter, written by Secretary of Public Education Mariana Padilla, explains how this report was created for this school year. There is information here to guide families to more assessment literacy resources.

Overall Assessment Scores for Each Content Area

C *Overall Scale Score and Performance Level*

This section of the report provides the student's overall scale score and performance level for each assessment taken (refer to [Section 2.1](#)). Students receive an overall scale score and, based on that score, are placed in one of four performance levels, with Level 3 indicating the student is on target and Level 1 indicating the student needs support.

Lexile and Quantile

D For English Language Arts a Lexile score is provided. Additional resources can be accessed using the QR code or at lexile.com/parents-students/

For Mathematics a Quantile score is provided. Additional resources can be accessed using the QR code or at quantiles.com/parents-students/

Performance by Reporting Category

E *Reporting Category*

Within NM-MSSA there are specific skill sets (reporting categories) students demonstrate on the assessments. Each reporting category includes the header identifying the reporting category, a raw score indicating the number of points earned out of the total points possible, and an explanation of whether the student has met the expectations of the reporting category.

F *Reporting Category Performance Indicators*

A student's reporting category performance indicator represents how well the student performed in that category.

Reporting category performance indicators are:

- Above Standard
- At/Near Standard
- Below Standard

G *Individual Test Question Performance*

This section provides the number of points the student earned for each test question and which Reporting Category the question represents.

Comparison to the School, District, and State

H *Achievement Levels*

This lists the four performance levels and provides a brief description of each.

I *Scale Score Range*

Indicates the highest and lowest scale score for each performance level

J *Peer Comparison*

This section of the report shows a side-by-side comparison of a student's overall scale score with the average scale score of their peers in their school, in their district, and in the state.

New Mexico Measures of Student Success and Achievement (NM-MSSA)

Spring 2026 Student Report

Student Name: LASTNAME456, FIRST456
SSID: D00456
Date of Birth: 06/13/2013
Tested Grade: 05
Student Grade:
District: Demonstration District A
School: Demonstration School 3

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Thank you for your continued partnership with the New Mexico Public Education Department (PED) to ensure all students are healthy, secure in their identity, and holistically prepared for college, career, and life.

This Individual Score Report describes your student's performance on spring 2026 state assessments in the areas of Language Arts and Mathematics. The report is designed to give teachers and families a snapshot of where your student finished the 2024-25 school year relative to grade-level content standards and instruction. The PED reminds families that these results reflect a single measure and should be supplemented with other information received from your student's school for a more comprehensive look at their progress. Additional resources to support your student, such as growth trends and specific areas of opportunity, can be found at the online family portal at <https://nmparentportal.emetric.net/login>. The State Student ID (SSID) for your student is located above. For assistance accessing this portal, contact the Cognia Help Desk at nmtechsupport@cognia.org.

If you have specific questions about your student's performance on the assessment, you are encouraged to reach out directly to your student's school. The Family Report Interpretation Guide which provides additional information for families about the Individual Score Report is available online at [Family Resources for Student Reports · Cognia Help & Support](#)

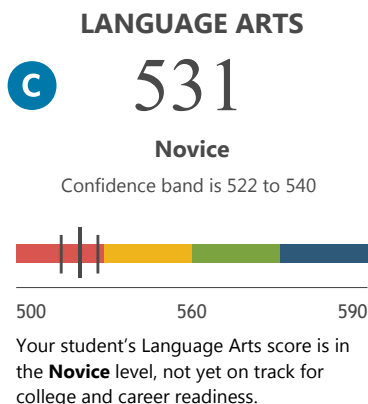
The PED appreciates your partnership in supporting your student's educational success.

Mariana D. Padilla

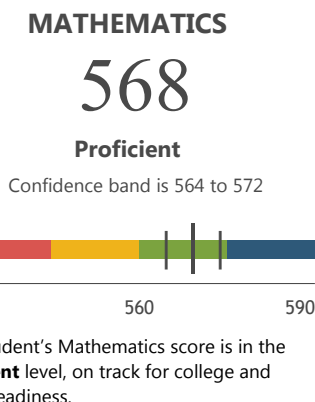
Mariana D. Padilla
 Secretary of Public Education, New Mexico Public Education Department



How did your student do on the New Mexico MSSA assessment? You can look at your student's scale scores, Achievement Level labels, and Achievement Level Descriptors to determine how well your student has done and whether additional support may be necessary. Your student's teacher can help you with interpreting this report and deciding on next steps for your student.



Your student's
 Lexile score:
670L



Your student's
 Quantile score:
845Q

Confidence bands: Your student's test score indicates performance on the day of the test. The confidence bands indicate the range of possible test scores your student would be expected to achieve on a different day.

Novice **Nearing Proficiency** **Proficient** **Advanced**

LANGUAGE ARTS

First456's Language Arts Performance by Reporting Category

	E	Points Earned / Points Possible	Subdomain Indicator F
Text type - Literary Text (LT)		3 / 15	Below Standard
Text type - Informational Text (IT)		2 / 8	Below Standard
Reading Strategy - Comprehension (CM)		3 / 12	Below Standard
Reading Strategy - Analysis and Interpretation (AI)		2 / 11	Below Standard
Writing Analysis and Language Conventions (WL)		3 / 14	Below Standard

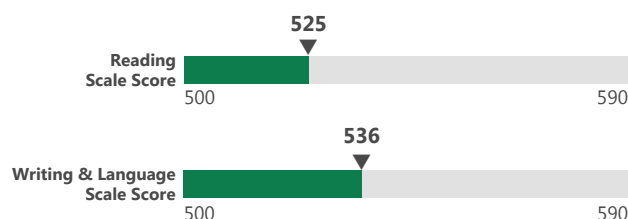
Key: x / y = x points earned out of y possible points

G Individual Test Questions

Report Sequence	Reporting Category	Reading Strategy	Points Earned	Report Sequence	Reporting Category	Reading Strategy	Points Earned	Report Sequence	Reporting Category	Reading Strategy	Points Earned	Report Sequence	Reporting Category	Reading Strategy	Points Earned
02	LT	CM	0/1	28	LT	AI	0/2	49	WL	–	0/1	71	UC	–	1/3
04	LT	CM	0/1	29	LT	AI	0/1	55	WL	–	0/1				
08	LT	CM	0/1	34	IT	CM	0/1	56	WL	–	0/1				
09	LT	AI	1/1	36	IT	CM	1/1	57	WL	–	0/1				
10	LT	AI	0/1	37	IT	CM	1/1	60	WL	–	1/2				
13	LT	CM	0/1	38	IT	AI	0/1	61	WL	–	0/1				
14	LT	CM	0/2	39	IT	AI	0/1	63	WL	–	0/1				
16	LT	CM	0/1	41	IT	CM	0/1	65	WL	–	1/1				
19	LT	CM	1/1	45	IT	AI	0/2	67	WL	–	1/1				
21	LT	AI	1/1	47	WL	–	0/1	69	WL	–	0/2				
24	LT	AI	0/1	48	WL	–	0/1	71	PW	–	2/4				

Key:
Points Earned:
 x / y = x points earned out of y possible points
 Blank space = no answer
 – = Not Applicable
 PW = Production of Writing
 UC = Use of Conventions

To interpret the chart, go online to access the Student Response Grid Guide:
<https://newmexico.onlinehelp.cognia.org/reporting-resources/#item-analysis-report>.



Your student's **Reading** and **Writing & Language** scale scores are shown here. For additional information about the Achievement Levels that correspond with these scores, as well as your student's total Language Arts score, please reference the table below.

H COMPARISON to the SCHOOL, DISTRICT, and STATE

ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

Advanced – Students show **thorough** understanding of how to interpret and analyze texts, use language and its conventions, and write for a task and purpose.

573 – 590

Proficient – Students show **satisfactory** understanding of how to interpret and analyze texts, use language and its conventions, and write for a task and purpose.

560 – 572

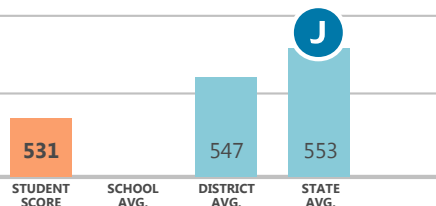
Nearing Proficiency – Students show **partial** understanding of how to interpret and analyze texts, use language and its conventions, and write for a task and purpose.

543 – 559

Novice – Students show **emerging** understanding of how to interpret and analyze texts, use language and its conventions, and write for a task and purpose.

500 – 542

I SCALE SCORE RANGE



MATHEMATICS

First456's Mathematics Performance by Reporting Category

	Points Earned / Points Possible	Subdomain Indicator
Operations & Algebraic Thinking (OA)	5 / 5	Above Standard
Number & Operations in Base Ten/Number & Operations - Fractions (NO)	16 / 26	Above Standard
Measurement & Data/Geometry (MG)	9 / 18	At/Near Standard
Problem Solving/Reasoning & Argument (PR)	13 / 23	Above Standard
Modeling/Structure & Repeated Reasoning (MS)	13 / 21	At/Near Standard

Key: x / y = x points earned out of y possible points

Individual Test Questions

Report Sequence	Reporting Category	Practice Category	Points Earned	Report Sequence	Reporting Category	Practice Category	Points Earned	Report Sequence	Reporting Category	Practice Category	Points Earned	Report Sequence	Reporting Category	Practice Category	Points Earned	Report Sequence	Reporting Category	Practice Category	Points Earned
01	OA	PR	1/1	12	NO	PR	1/1	24	NO	–	1/1	35	MG	MS	0/1	46	MG	PR	1/1
02	OA	PR	1/1	13	NO	PR	0/1	25	NO	PR	1/1	36	MG	MS	0/1	47	MG	MS	0/1
03	OA	MS	1/1	14	NO	PR	1/1	26	NO	PR	0/1	37	MG	MS	0/1	48	MG	MS	1/1
04	OA	MS	1/1	15	NO	–	0/1	27	NO	MS	1/1	38	MG	PR	0/1	49	MG	–	0/2
05	OA	MS	1/1	16	NO	PR	1/1	28	NO	MS	1/1	39	MG	PR	1/1	50	–	PR	0/1
06	NO	PR	0/1	17	NO	PR	0/1	29	NO	MS	1/1	40	MG	MS	1/1				
07	NO	PR	1/1	18	NO	–	1/1	30	NO	PR	0/1	41	MG	MS	1/1				
08	NO	PR	0/1	19	NO	PR	1/1	31	NO	PR	1/1	42	MG	MS	1/1				
09	NO	MS	0/1	20	NO	PR	1/1	32	NO	PR	0/1	43	MG	MS	0/1				
10	NO	–	2/2	21	NO	PR	0/1	33	MG	MS	1/1	44	MG	MS	1/1				
11	–	MS	0/1	22	NO	PR	1/1	34	MG	MS	0/1	45	MG	MS	1/1				

Key:

Points Earned:

x / y = x points earned out of y possible points

Blank space = no answer

– = Not Applicable

PW = Production of Writing

UC = Use of Conventions

To interpret the chart, go online to access the Student Response Grid Guide:

<https://newmexico.onlinehelp.cognia.org/reporting-resources/#item-analysis-report>

COMPARISON to the SCHOOL, DISTRICT, and STATE

ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

SCALE SCORE RANGE

Advanced – Students show **thorough** understanding of mathematical concepts and strong procedural skill, fluency, and application to solve problems.

573 – 590

Proficient – Students show **satisfactory** understanding of mathematical concepts and adequate procedural skill, fluency, and application to solve problems.

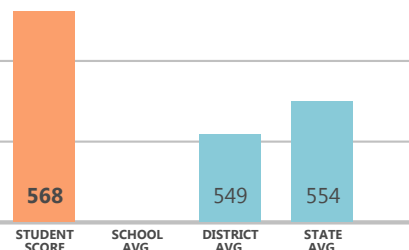
560 – 572

Nearing Proficiency – Students show **partial** understanding of mathematical concepts and some procedural skill, fluency, and application to solve problems.

548 – 559

Novice – Students show **emerging** understanding of mathematical concepts and beginner procedural skill, fluency, and application to solve problems.

500 – 547



3.0 Understanding the NM-MSSA School and District Reports

3.1 Purpose and Use of NM-MSSA Results

The NM-MSSA is New Mexico's statewide summative assessment for Language Arts and Mathematics, administered at the end of grades 3–8. As the NM-MSSA are singular measures at the end of a grade, interpretations and uses of NM-MSSA scores should be supplemented with additional measures, including information from classroom summative and formative assessments in Language Arts and Mathematics, as well as interim assessments.

3.2 NM-MSSA School and District Reports

Districts and schools will have access to digital ISRs and a dynamic, customizable grade-level Student List in the Data Interaction reporting platform. The Student List can be customized by adding or removing data fields and by sorting and filtering selected data fields.

Data tools can be used to summarize scores and review score distributions for the whole group or disaggregate scores by subgroups. Bivariate analyses, both cross-tab and scatterplot, can be used to explore the relationship between scores.

ISRs and the Student List can be downloaded in a variety of formats for printing, presentations, or uploading into other analysis tools. Performance on NM-MSSA assessments is described on the school and district reports using scale scores, performance levels, and reporting category performance levels.

3.3 Types of Scores on the NM-MSSA School and District Reports

Performance on NM-MSSA assessments is described on the school and district reports using scale scores, performance levels, and reporting category performance indicators. Information about state, district, and school average results is included in relevant sections of the report to help schools and districts understand how student and school performance compares to other students and schools. In some instances, a dash (–) will appear in place of average results for a school and/or district. This indicates that there are too few students to maintain student privacy and, therefore, results are not reported.

3.3.1 Scale Score

A scale score is a numerical value that summarizes student performance. Not all students respond to the same set of test items, so each student's scale score takes into account the slight differences in difficulty among the various forms of the test. The scale score allows for an appropriate comparison across test forms and administration years within a grade or course and content area. This year, NM-MSSA reports provide overall scale scores for Language Arts and Mathematics, each of which determines a student's performance level in the respective content area. You can reference the NM-MSSA scale score ranges in a table that appears on [page 12](#).

For example, a student who earns an overall scale score of 800 on one form of the grade 8 Mathematics assessment would be expected to earn an overall scale score of 800 on any other form of the grade 8 Mathematics assessment. Furthermore, the student's overall scale score and level of mastery of concepts and skills would be comparable to a student who took the same assessment the previous year or following year.

3.3.2 Performance Level

Each performance level is a broad, categorical level defined by a student's overall scale score and is used to report overall student performance by describing how well students met the expectations for their grade level/course in the given content area. Each performance level is defined by a range of overall scale scores for the assessment. This year, there are four performance levels for NM-MSSA assessments:

- Level 4: Advanced
- Level 3: Proficient
- Level 2: Nearing Proficiency
- Level 1: Novice

Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs) describe the knowledge, skills, and practices that students should know and be able to demonstrate at each performance level in each content area (Language Arts and Mathematics), and at each grade level/course.

Web links to the PLDs are listed in ["Appendix B: Performance Level Descriptors"](#) on page 13.

3.3.3 Reporting Category Performance Indicators

Reporting category performance for NM-MSSA assessments is reported to indicate whether the student performed above standard, at/near standard, and below standard in a given reporting category.

3.4 Description of The Student List and Summary Statistics

The following pages show examples of student reports. The text below describes what the information represents.

General Information

A **Assessment Information**

The Student List displays the assessment, state, year, and the grade level.

B **Identification Information**

The first column of the Student List displays the students in the school by last name. The students' first names and State Student IDs are shown in the next two columns.

Overall Assessment Scores

C **Scale Score**

This column provides the student's overall scale score. Students receive a numerical score and, based on that score, are placed in one of four achievement levels.

D **Achievement Levels**

This column provides the student's performance levels of Advanced, Proficient, Nearing Proficiency, or Novice.

Report Functionality

E **Options**

The options menu provides the capability to customize the Student List report. Student demographic fields and score data can be added or removed from the report. Additional scores can also be added or removed. This includes subject level scale scores and subclaim achievement levels.

F **Save**

Each report and the current selections can be saved in Data Interaction, allowing the user to conveniently retrieve the report at a later date. Saved reports can be retrieved by clicking on the Save icon.

G **Download**

Tabular reports can be downloaded as an excel, CSV or PDF file by clicking on the Download icon. Charts can be downloaded as PDFs.

H **Help**

A detailed user guide is available by selecting the Help icon.

I **Student ISR**

The ISR for each student in the Student List Report can be viewed by clicking on the Student icon.

Performance by Reporting Category

J **Reporting Category**

Within NM-MSSA, there are specific skill sets (reporting categories) students demonstrate on the assessments. Each reporting category includes the header identifying the reporting category; state, district, and school averages; and an indicator of the student's performance.

Summary Statistics

Click on Scale Score > Summarize on the Student List page to view summary statistics for the selected organization.

K **Population**

This count includes both valid and invalid students.

L **Valid N**

This count includes only valid student records.

M **Summary Statistics**

These statistics include mean, standard deviation and the minimum and maximum of the selected score.

N **Recent Reports**

Recently generated reports can be viewed, within the session.

Sample Student List (Language Arts and Mathematics, and Summary Statistics)

NEW MEXICO Online Reporting by Data Interaction™

Back to New Mexico Portal

Student List: MSSA, New Mexico State, 2024-2025, Spring, Grade 03

Options Save Download

Help CS eMetric

B	C	D	E	F	G	I
	Language Arts	Mathematics	Achievement Level	Scale Score	Achievement Level	Scale Score
Last Name	First Name	State Student ID	Scale Score	Achievement Level	Scale Score	Achievement Level
L Name	F Name	123456789	371	Advanced	358	Nearing Proficiency
L Name	F Name	123456789	357	Nearing Proficiency	358	Nearing Proficiency
L Name	F Name	123456789	349	Nearing Proficiency	344	Nearing Proficiency
L Name	F Name	123456789	389	Advanced	389	Advanced
L Name	F Name	123456789	369	Proficient	366	Proficient
L Name	F Name	123456789	368	Proficient	357	Nearing Proficiency
L Name	F Name	123456789	375	Advanced	368	Proficient
L Name	F Name	123456789	338	Nearing Proficiency	340	Novice
L Name	F Name	123456789	364	Proficient	364	Proficient
L Name	F Name	123456789	362	Proficient	344	Nearing Proficiency
L Name	F Name	123456789	375	Advanced	362	Proficient
L Name	F Name	123456789	371	Advanced	355	Nearing Proficiency
L Name	F Name	123456789	389	Advanced	364	Proficient
L Name	F Name	123456789	357	Nearing Proficiency	361	Proficient

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NEW MEXICO Online Reporting by Data Interaction™

Back to New Mexico Portal

Student List: MSSA, New Mexico State, 2024-2025, Spring, Grade 03

Options Save Download

Help CS eMetric

J	Language Arts				Mathematics			
	Text Type - Literary Text	Text Type - Informational Text	Reading Strategy - Comprehension	Reading Strategy - Analysis and Interpretation	Text Type - Literary Text	Text Type - Informational Text	Reading Strategy - Comprehension	Reading Strategy - Analysis and Interpretation
Last Name	First Name	State Student ID	Scale Score	Achievement Level	Points Earned	Points Earned	Points Earned	Points Earned
L Name	F Name	123456789	371	Advanced	11	6	8	9
L Name	F Name	123456789	357	Nearing Proficiency	10	5	10	5
L Name	F Name	123456789	349	Nearing Proficiency	8	3	8	3

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Select Options-> Additional Scores can be added or removed. This includes subject level scale scores and reporting category achievement levels.

Appendix A: Scale Score Ranges

Subject	Grade	Scale Score Range			
		Novice	Nearing Proficiency	Proficient	Advanced
Language Arts	3	300–335	336–359	360–369	370–390
	4	400–439	440–459	460–472	473–490
	5	500–542	543–559	560–572	573–590
	6	600–631	632–659	660–672	673–690
	7	700–730	731–759	760–774	775–790
	8	800–839	840–859	860–870	871–890
Mathematics	3	300–340	341–359	360–376	377–390
	4	400–443	444–459	460–479	480–490
	5	500–547	548–559	560–572	573–590
	6	600–645	646–659	660–678	679–690
	7	700–747	748–759	760–769	770–790
	8	800–840	841–859	860–877	878–890

Appendix B: Performance Level Descriptors

Grades 3–8 Language Arts and Mathematics

PLDs for grades 3-8 Language Arts and Mathematics are available at <https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/bureaus/assessment/mssa-resources/>

