

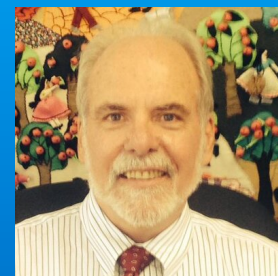


AzMERIT

Arizona's **M**easurement of **E**ducational **R**eadiness to **I**nform **T**eaching

AzMERIT Debuts

Joe O'Reilly, Ph.D.
Mesa Public Schools





AzMERIT

Arizona's **M**easurement of **E**ducational **R**eadiness to **I**nfarm **T**eaching

AzMERIT Debuts:

Online reports and data files to LEAs: October 6

Paper Family Reports to LEAs: October 20

ADE public release: Some time TBD in November

Joe O'Reilly, Ph.D.
Mesa Public Schools

Today's Topics

- AzMERIT background
- How were performance levels established?
- Were the AzMERIT results expected?
- What will Family Reports look like?
- Are there resources for communication with families, teachers and communities?

The AzMERIT Test Was Created Just for Arizona

- AzMERIT is unique to Arizona, based on an AZ test blueprint which determined the objectives measured, the number of items per objective and the cognitive demand (e.g., recall or application or analysis)
- The test questions were drawn from a Utah item bank this year
- ADE is moving toward all items being written just for AzMERIT
- Until recently, no test had items written specifically for Arizona

AIMS Math Item

3 Which does **not** represent y as a function of x ?

A $x = y^2 + 2$

B $y = x^2 + 2$

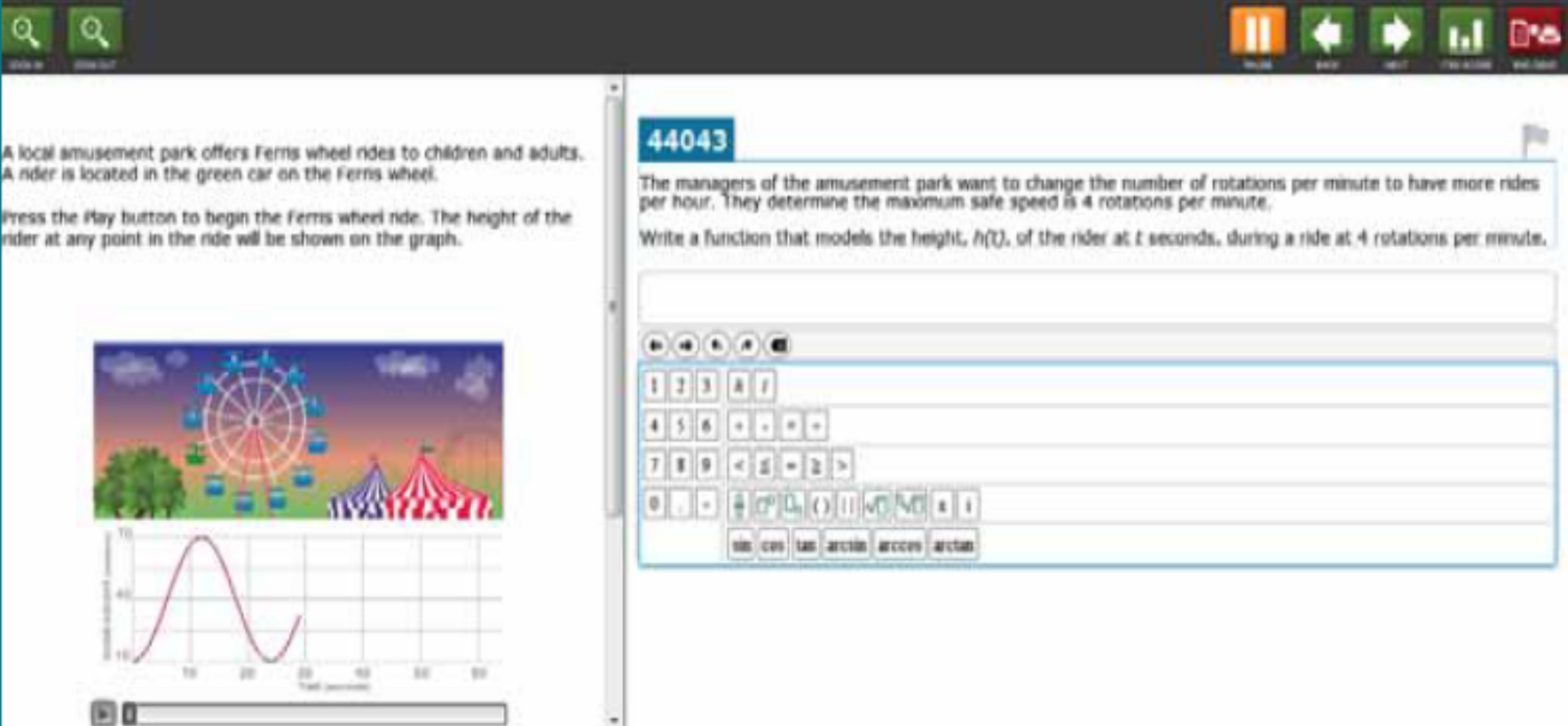
C $x = y + 8$

D $y = -x + 8$

AzMERIT Sample Math Item

A local amusement park offers Ferris wheel rides to children and adults. A rider is located in the green car on the Ferris wheel.

Press the Play button to begin the Ferris wheel ride. The height of the rider at any point in the ride will be shown on the graph.



44043

The managers of the amusement park want to change the number of rotations per minute to have more rides per hour. They determine the maximum safe speed is 4 rotations per minute.

Write a function that models the height, $h(t)$, of the rider at t seconds, during a ride at 4 rotations per minute.

[http://demo.tds.airast.org/AIRAssessment/default.aspx?](http://demo.tds.airast.org/AIRAssessment/default.aspx?disableJava=true&client=AIR&messages=AIR&acc=Content\\acc_default.json&config=Content\\AIR_Assessment_default.json)

[disableJava=true&client=AIR&messages=AIR&acc=Content\\acc_default.json&config=Content\\](http://demo.tds.airast.org/AIRAssessment/default.aspx?disableJava=true&client=AIR&messages=AIR&acc=Content\\acc_default.json&config=Content\\AIR_Assessment_default.json)

[AIR_Assessment_default.json](http://demo.tds.airast.org/AIRAssessment/default.aspx?disableJava=true&client=AIR&messages=AIR&acc=Content\\acc_default.json&config=Content\\AIR_Assessment_default.json)

Initial Reactions to the Test

- Mesa Teachers (78%) felt it was harder than AIMS more than Mesa students (48% JH, 58% EI)
- Teachers and students felt that it mostly covered what was taught (90% T, 87% JH, 89% EI)
- Teachers thought the format was more difficult than students did (64%T, 52% JH, 45% EI)
- Teachers were less likely to want to use computers next year (53%T, 67% JH, 68% EI) and were more likely to think using the computer was hard (51% T, 22% JH, 38% EI)

How Were Performance Levels Set?

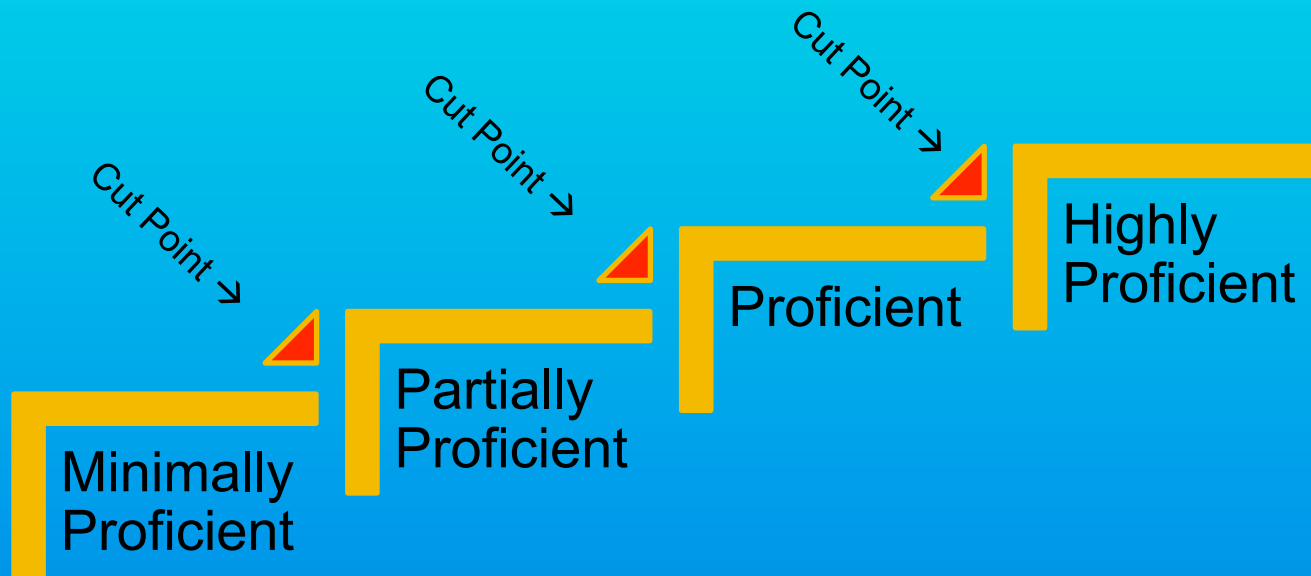
ADE Had Teachers Develop Grade/ Subject Performance Level Descriptors

Detailed descriptions, that describe the skills and abilities that students must demonstrate, are provided for each performance level.

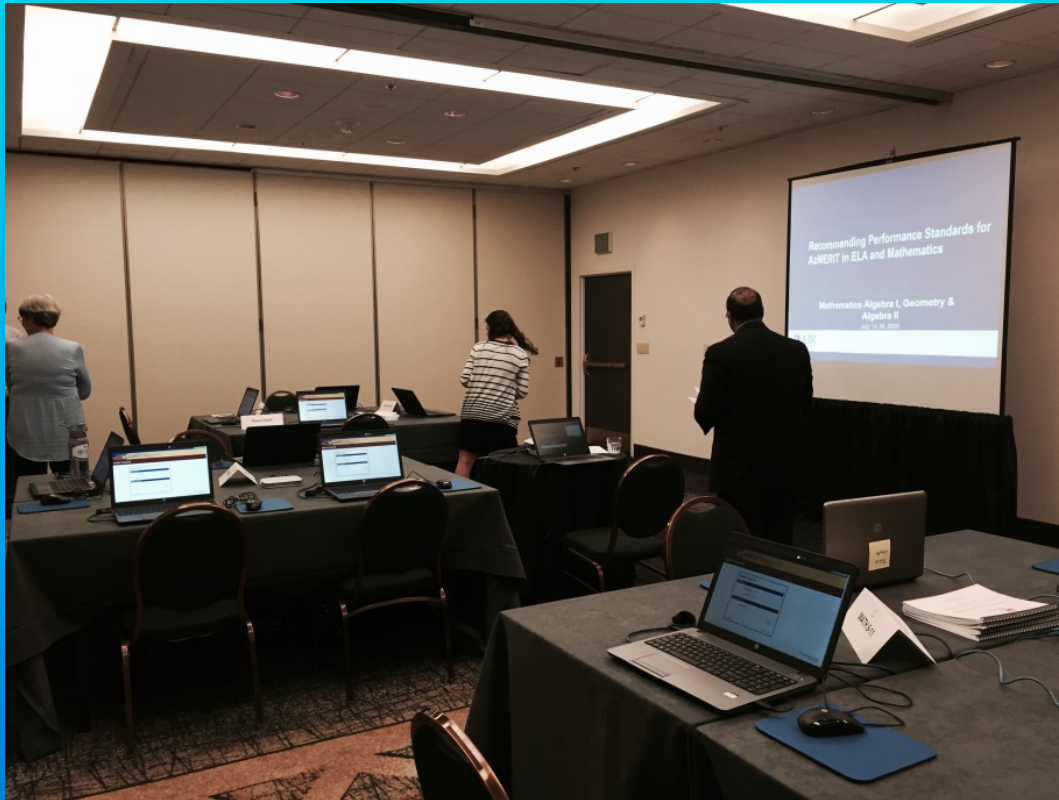
AzMERIT MATH GRADE 6					
PLD	Standard	Minimally Proficient	Partially Proficient	Proficient	Highly Proficient
		The Minimally Proficient student	The Partially Proficient student	The Proficient student	The Highly Proficient student
		Ratios and Proportional Relationships			
Detailed	6.RP.A [1 to 2]	Identifies unit rates and describes them using basic language or notation.	Describes the concept of ratio using a limited variety of representations and determines a unit rate.	Uses the concept of a ratio, ratio language, ratio notation, and unit rate associated with a ratio to precisely describe a ratio relationship between two quantities and within context.	Uses and connects between representation for ratio situations and finds unit rates requiring multiple steps.
Detailed	6.RP.A.3 [a to d]	Identifies proportional relationships presented in graphical, tabular, or verbal formats, knows the meaning of a percent of a quantity as a rate per hundred, and finds missing values in tables and plots values on the coordinate plane using whole numbers.	Uses a limited variety of representations to solve ratio and unit rate problems involving whole numbers and to convert measurement units, finds the percent of a quantity, and manipulates units appropriately when multiplying or dividing quantities.	Uses ratio and rate reasoning to convert measurement units and solve real-world problems, solves unit rate problems including those involving unit pricing and constant speed, determines the percent of a quantity as a rate per 100, and solves problems involving finding the whole given a part and a percent.	Creates and applies ratio reasoning to solve real-world problems including those involving percent or conversion of measurement units.

<http://www.azed.gov/assessment/azmeritsupportmaterials/>

Setting the Performance Levels

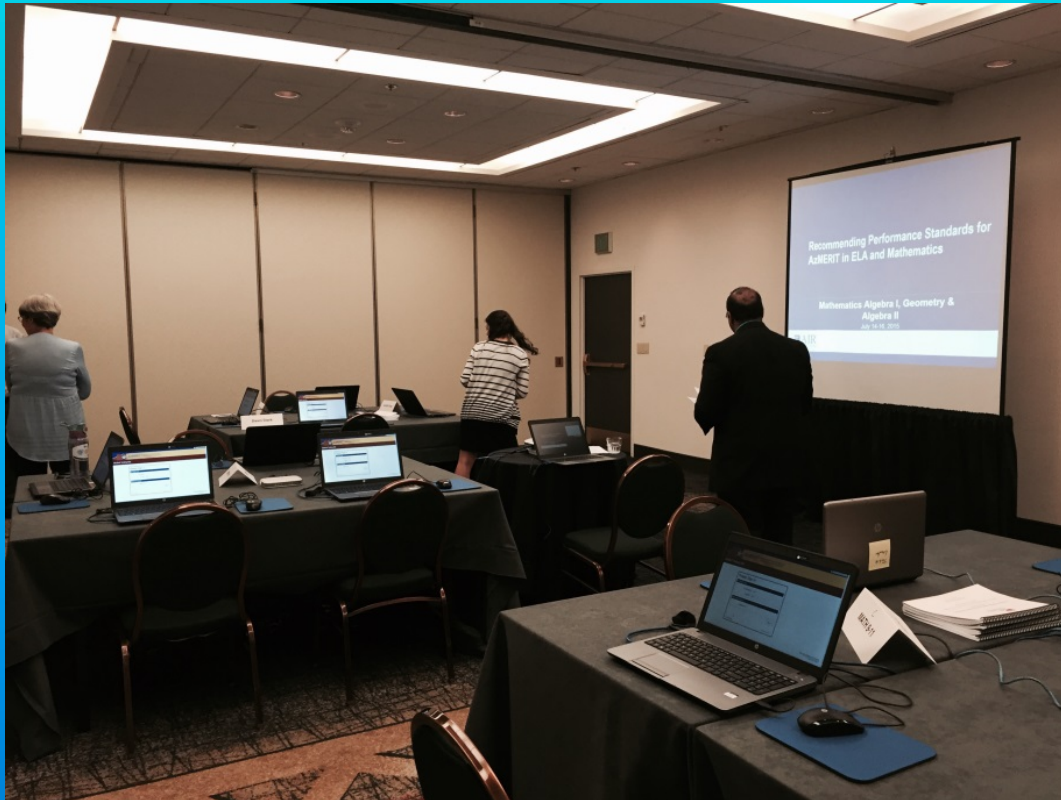


Setting Performance Levels



- Teams consisted of 11-12 teachers familiar with the specific grade levels
- There were teams for grades:
 - 3-4,
 - 5-6,
 - 7-8,
 - 9-10-11
 - In ELA and in math
- Within each grade/subject team teachers were divided into 3 tables of 4 teachers each

Setting Performance Levels



- Teachers reviewed the performance level descriptors
- They took the test
- They came to agreement of what a “just barely” proficient student would know and do
- Then they set the cut points for highly proficient, proficient and partially proficient

Setting Performance Levels: The Bookmark Method



- They were given the test items in order of difficulty, from easiest to hardest
- They could see where the performance levels of NAEP, Smarter Balanced Test, AIMS, ACT College and Career Ready Index and/or PISA corresponded to the difficulty of certain items.
- They bookmarked where they thought the 'just barely' student would respond correctly and the 'not there yet' student would not
- They then came to consensus as a table of 4 and then as the larger group of 12 teachers

Setting Performance Levels: The Bookmark Method



- Then they saw what percent of students would fall in each performance category given their cutpoints.
- Then they went through the same process to review and possibly reset their bookmarks.
- They did this for each of the three boundaries – minimal to partial, partial to proficient, proficient to highly proficient
- Once one grade was completed, they went through a similar process for the lower grade.

Teachers Felt They Set The Levels

“I felt my voice was heard in setting cut points for the AZ Merit. In my group, we had thoughtful and rich discussions placing bookmarks based on content. We had some close cut-point decisions and those that were higher/lower than expected. Teachers were able to share their rationale for cut points using the PLD documents and student performance. I did not feel pressured by AIR or ADE to select cut points, however after round 1 it was interesting to see our groups' similarities to Smarter Balanced and NAEP.”

-- Mesa Teacher

The State Board of Education Accepted the Teachers' Recommendations With No Changes

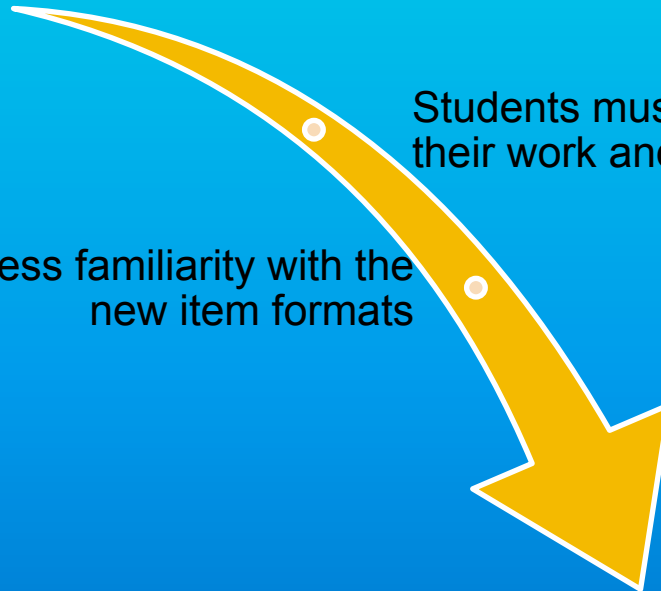
- All subjects – ELA and math
- All grade levels – 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11
- All performance levels – minimally proficient, partially proficient, proficient, highly proficient

We Expected Lower Passing Rates

Students may have only been exposed to the new standards for a limited time

Students must show their work and reasoning

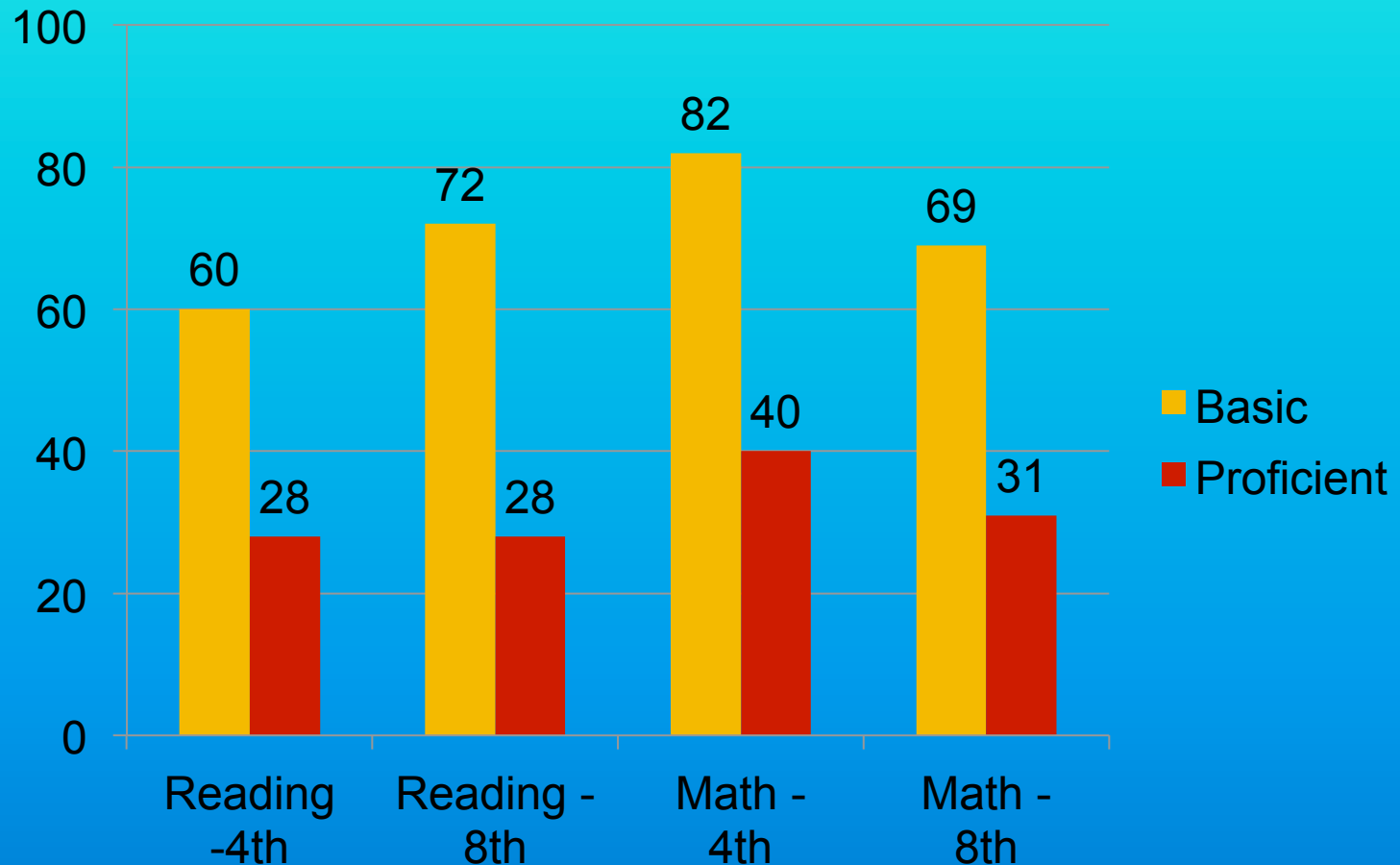
Less familiarity with the new item formats



**We Expected Passing to Decrease
Because Expectations Increased**

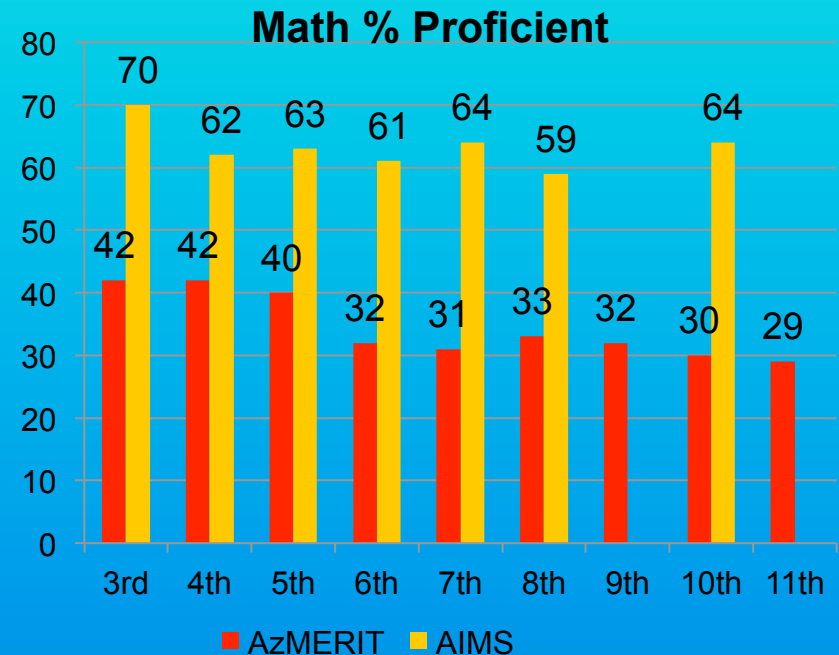
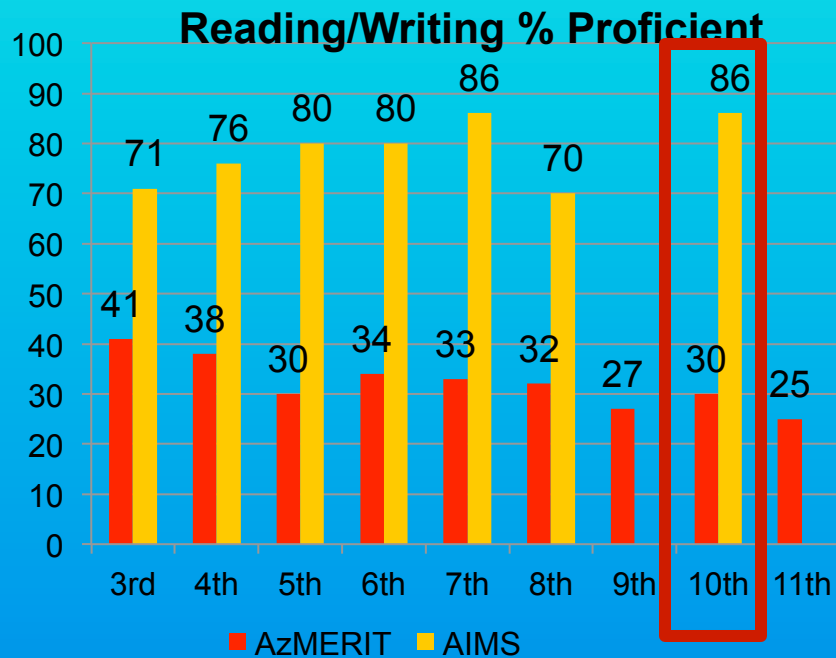


Expectations Moved From the NAEP Basic Level Closer to Proficient Level



Latest NAEP results for Arizona showing percent at or above the level indicated

The Percent Proficient On AzMERIT Is Lower Than Passing on AIMS



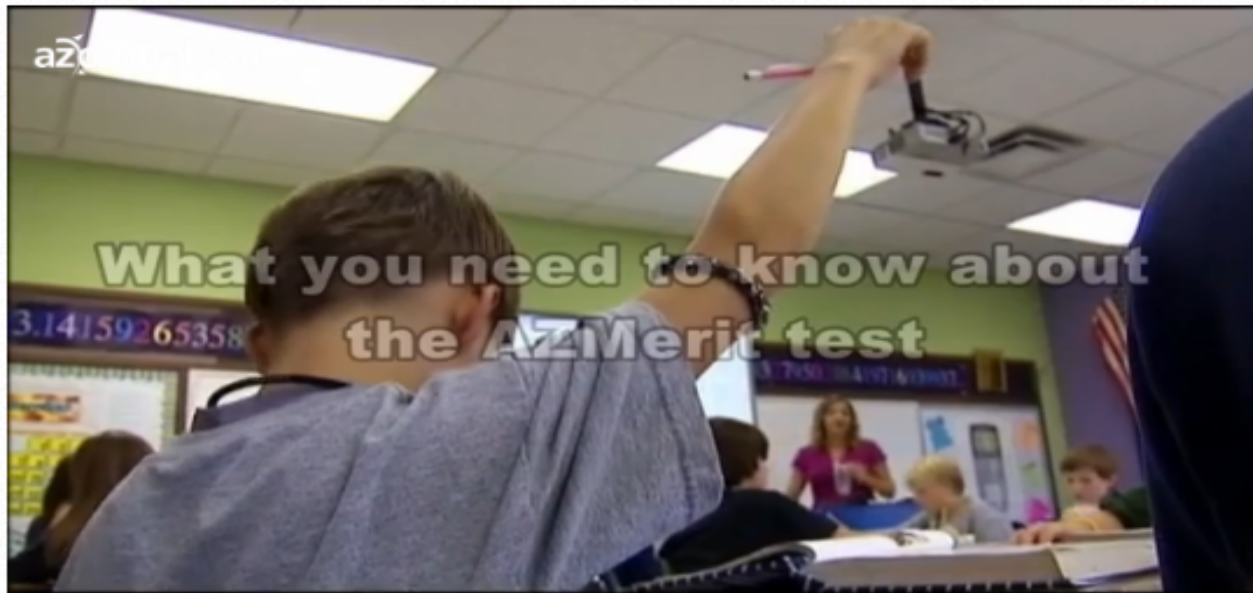
This Drop Is Not Unique To Arizona

AzMERIT: Most Arizona students not 'proficient' in reading, math

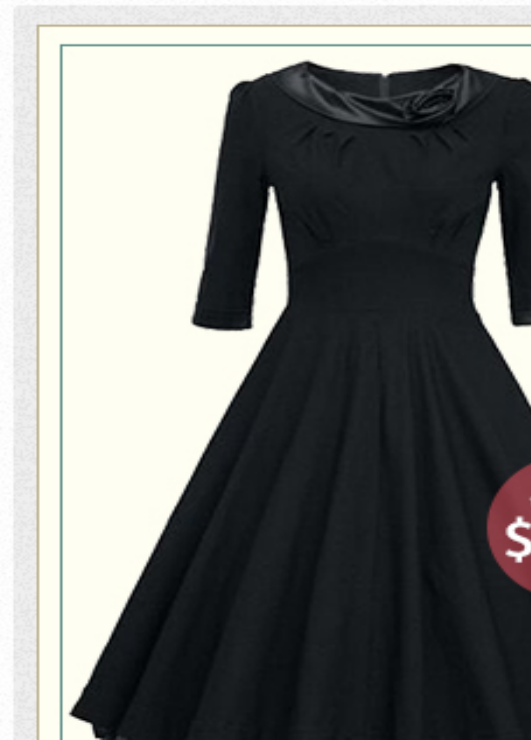


Cathryn Creno, The Republic | azcentral.com

11:41 a.m. MST August 8, 2015



10 things parents need to know about the new state test.



Parents Will Be Concerned

- Many students who have been “Meeting The Standard” for years will suddenly be labeled as “Partially Proficient” or even “Minimally Proficient.”
- Districts should have a plan to prepare parents before results are released and a strategy for responding after the results are sent home.
- Teachers have the personal relationship with parents, so preparing your teachers to answer parents’ questions and concerns is very important.

How Will Parents React?



Family Report

Maria A. Doe

ABC School (123654)

ABC District (987456)

Grade 6 Math Assessment**About This Assessment**

Maria took the AzMERIT Grade 6 Math assessment in spring 2015. The questions in this assessment measure the knowledge and skills taught in this grade and subject area.

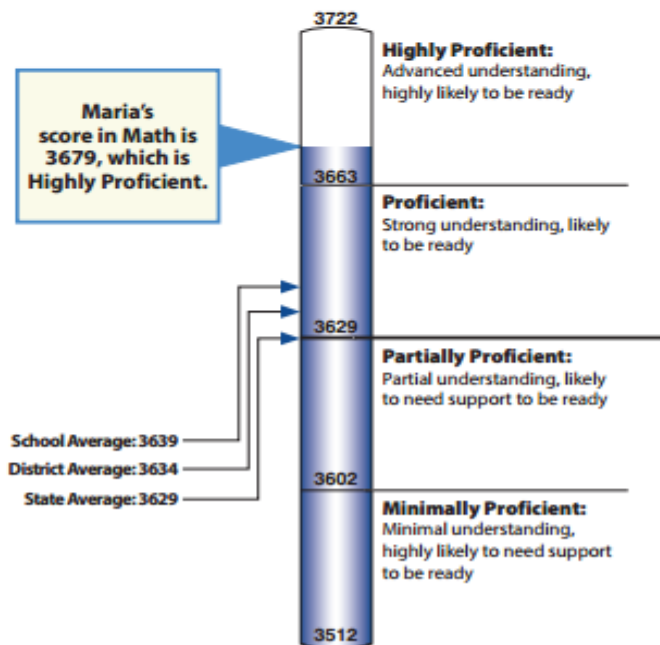
Maria's score shows how well she understands Grade 6 Math content. A student who scores **Proficient** or **Highly Proficient** on AzMERIT is likely to be ready for the next grade level of Math.

About This Report**Front:**

- Maria's overall score for this assessment includes a numeric score and a proficiency level.
- Her numeric score can be compared with the school, district, and state averages.
- The proficiency level indicates how well students understand current grade level material and how likely they are to be ready for the next grade.

Back:

- Maria's level of mastery is shown for each scoring category.
- Scoring categories represent specific knowledge and skills included in this assessment.
- There is a detailed description of the mastery level for each scoring category.

Maria's Performance on the Math Assessment**Maria's score is Highly Proficient.**

She shows an **advanced** understanding of the expectations for her tested grade. She is highly likely to be ready for math in the next grade.

Family Report: Math

In English Only

But, in cooperation with ADE which provided the report content, Mesa is translating the content and designing an interpretation guide. We will be making it available for download.

FAMILY SCORE REPORT

AzMERIT

Legend: Scoring Categories

Below Mastery

At/Near Mastery

Above Mastery

Math Scoring Categories

Ratio and Proportional Relationships

Maria performed **above mastery** in Ratio and Proportional Relationships.

What was assessed?

Students understand ratios, rates, and percentages. They use proportions to describe relationships between two numbers and recognize similar relationships. They use ratios and rates to solve problems and to create tables. They convert units of measurement.

What do these results mean?

Your student almost always correctly uses ratios, rates, or percents to describe relationships between numbers or values; solves unit rate problems that involve multiple steps, real-world situations, or percents; and converts units of measurement to solve problems.

Expressions and Equations

Maria performed **at or near mastery** in Expressions and Equations.

What was assessed?

Students write, read, and find the value of expressions with exponents and letters that stand for numbers. They produce and identify equivalent expressions. They understand that solutions to equations and inequalities are the values that make the equations or inequalities true.

What do these results mean?

Your student is often able to find values of expressions with exponents; solve equations and inequalities; use inequalities to describe real-world relationships; and identify independent and dependent variables and use equations to describe the relationship between them.

The Number System

Maria performed **at or near mastery** in The Number System.

What was assessed?

Students solve division problems with fractions. They add, subtract, multiply, and divide when solving problems with multidigit decimal numbers. They find the greatest common factor and least common multiple. They understand the relationship between positive and negative numbers.

What do these results mean?

Your student is often able to use addition, subtraction, multiplication, or division strategically to solve problems; find greatest common factors and least common multiples; use positive and negative numbers and plot them on a graph; and determine the distance between two points.

Geometry, Statistics, and Probability

Maria performed **below mastery** in Geometry, Statistics and Probability.

What was assessed?

Students find the area of geometric figures and apply techniques used to solve real-world problems. They find the volume of solid figures. They draw polygons and three-dimensional figures. They recognize statistical questions. They describe, display, and interpret data.

What do these results mean?

Your student may have trouble finding the area of polygons; representing three-dimensional figures; recognizing statistical questions; identifying data represented in a graph; understanding the meaning of mean, median, mode, and range; and displaying data visually.

For more information about AzMERIT, go to azmeritportal.org.

AZED.GOV

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

AIMS Concept Reports Are Different

Arizona's
Instrument to Measure Standards
Grades 3 - 8 (AIMS 3 - 8)

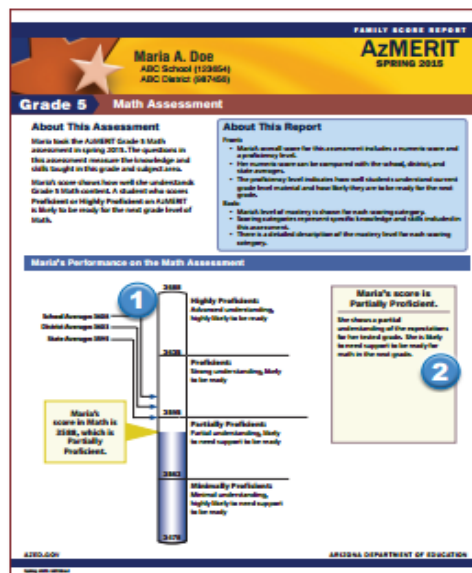
Student Report
Page 2

How did FIRSTNAMEXXXXXXXXXX perform on each Reading Strand/Concept?

Reading Strand/Concept Results

Strands/Concepts	Number Possible	Number Correct	Percent Correct	0	25	50	75	100
Strand 1: Reading Process	##	##	###					
Concept 4: Vocabulary	##	##	###					
Concept 6: Comprehension	##	##	###					
Strand 2: Comprehending Literary Text	##	##	###					
Concept 1: Elements of Literature	##	##	###					
Strand 3: Comprehending Informational Text	##	##	###					
Concept 1: Expository Text	##	##	###					
Concept 2: Functional Text	##	##	###					
Concept 3: Persuasive Text	##	##	###					
Total	####	####	###					

AzMERIT FAMILY REPORT GUIDE

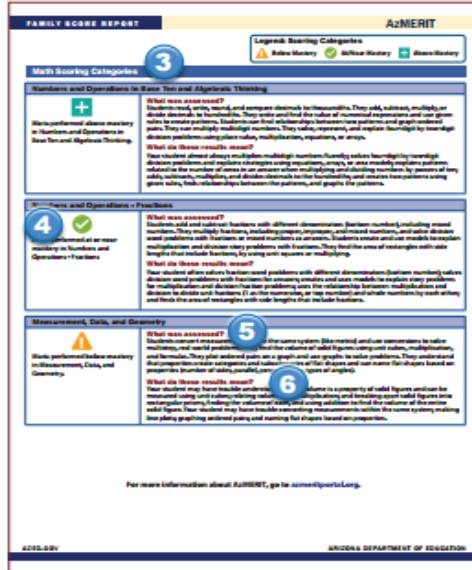


1 Barrel Chart

This "barrel chart" shows the range of scores and the four performance levels possible on this test. Your student's numeric score is shown along with the averages for your student's school, district, and the state of Arizona.

2 Performance Levels

Your student's performance level is identified in this box. There are four performance levels that describe the general skills and abilities for students who take the AzMERIT. Students who score in the "Proficient" or "Highly Proficient" range are likely to be ready for the next grade or course. Students who score in the "Partially Proficient" or "Minimally Proficient" range are likely to need support to be ready for the next grade or course.



3 Scoring Categories

Each test has three or more scoring categories that describe the content in different parts of the test.

4 Mastery Levels

Your student's ability level for each of these scoring categories is indicated. Students with the symbol  or  show a good understanding of the content covered in this scoring category. Students with the symbol  likely need more support with the content covered in this scoring category.

5 What Was Assessed?

This short paragraph describes what type of content is covered in this scoring category.

6 What Do These Results Mean?

This short paragraph describes your student's understanding of the content in this scoring category based on his or her ability level.

For more information about your student's academic performance, contact your student's teacher or school.

How Can You Communicate This?

The performance levels were set by veteran Arizona teachers. They had high expectations for students and focused on what students should be able to do once we fully implement the standards, not just what many students can do today.

The results we are receiving are the new baseline. This is the first time we have given the AzMERIT test. It is a completely different test than AIMS, so comparing the results to AIMS is not appropriate. Teachers had not seen this test before and students only had access to some practice items a few weeks before the test, so scores are somewhat lower because of a lack of familiarity with the test format. So, this is the new baseline from which we need to improve.

The important thing these results tell us is **not that scores are falling, but that expectations are soaring.** What students need to know and be able to do on the AzMERIT test requires much more than the AIMS test. The teachers who set the performance levels saw where AIMS passing was on the new test, and went way above that.

How Can You Communicate This?

New, more rigorous tests are being introduced not only in Arizona, but in most states around the country. If our students are to keep up with the students around the country when they go off to college and the workplace, we have to make sure Arizona students are held to a similarly high bar.

Other states saw a large drop in the percent proficient, similar to what we saw in Arizona, when new tests were put in place. This indicates that all states have significantly increased what is expected of students and schools.

Resources for Communicating With Parents Are Available

Home Users Resources Supported Browsers

AzMERIT | Arizona's Statewide Achievement Assessment for English Language Arts and Mathematics

Students & Families

Educators & Test Administrators

Test Coordinators

Technology Resources

Announcements

- The Secure Browsers for computer-based testing in Fall 2015 are now available for download on the Secure Browsers page. For guidance on installation, please refer to the Secure Browser Installation Manual.
- Please note: The Secure Browser must be downloaded for the new school year, for both Fall and Spring administrations.
- Technology resources such as Technical Specifications, Systems Requirements, and Operating System Support Plan for Test Delivery System are available in the Key Documents.
- Added August 12, 2015*
- AzMERIT Test Windows for School Year 2015-2016**

Fall 2015 AzMERIT EOC
Computer-Based Test Window

Home Users Resources Supported Browsers

AzMERIT | Arizona's Statewide Achievement Assessment for English Language Arts and Mathematics

Search Resources

Advanced Search

Students & Families

- AzMERIT Information
- AzMERIT Reporting
- Student Support Materials

Students & Families

- AzMERIT Information
- AzMERIT Reporting
- Student Support Materials

Home Users Resources Supported Browsers

AzMERIT | Arizona's Statewide Achievement Assessment for English Language Arts and Mathematics

Search Resources

Advanced Search

Students & Families - AzMERIT Reporting

Resource	Description
AzMERIT Family Report Guide - English [PDF]	
AzMERIT Sample Paper Report - ELA Grade 3 [PDF]	
AzMERIT Sample Paper Report - Math Grade 6 [PDF]	
AzMERIT Sample Paper Report - ELA Grade 9 [PDF]	
AzMERIT Sample Paper Report - EOC Algebra I [PDF]	

Here are samples of the AzMERIT Family Score Reports for both ELA and Math. There is also a Family Report Guide to help parents and students understand the different sections of the Family Score Reports.

Expect More Arizona Resources for Communicating With Parents

WHAT AZMERIT MEANS FOR YOUR CHILD

AzMERIT is like an annual checkup – an important opportunity to find out how your child is doing in school. Just as doctors check height and weight, teachers and parents use the test to check how students are doing in English and math.



Know if Your Child is on Track to Succeed

Although testing is never fun, assessments can be effective tools to support your child's learning. With AzMERIT, you will know if your child is on track to succeed in the next grade and ultimately in college or career. As a parent, you will have the information you need to make sure your child is making progress and is not falling behind.

New Test, New Scores

AzMERIT will set a more realistic benchmark for student performance. Because it is a completely new test, scores will look different than AIMS and may seem lower than before. However, this doesn't mean your child is doing worse. Instead, the scores will provide a more accurate view of how your child is doing academically.

Important Things Parents Need to Know

- Arizona students in 3rd grade through high school take the AzMERIT test in reading, writing and math each spring. For high school students, the test is given at the end of their English and math courses, similar to a final exam.
- School districts and charter schools can choose to administer AzMERIT via pencil/paper or on a computer. The questions are adaptable to either format.

What is AzMERIT?

AzMERIT replaced the AIMS test in reading, writing, and math for Arizona students in grades 3 through high school.

AzMERIT is better aligned with what your child is learning in the classroom. It goes beyond multiple choice questions to measure real learning, with a focus on assessing critical-thinking and problem-solving skills.

Tips to Help Your Child

Set shared goals with your child's teacher for what your

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Arizona Aims Higher

The tools you need to help your child succeed.



NEW! Grade by Grade Parent Guides

When you know what your child will be learning in the classroom, you and your child's teacher can identify when your child needs extra help or a greater challenge.

Download our new Grade-by-Grade Parent Guides

to find out what your child will learn in school this year and how you can help.

GET YOUR PARENT GUIDE

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TOP STORIES

Viewpoints: What low AzMERIT scores really mean August 31, 2015

Using Technology to Advance Toddler and Preschooler Learning August 28, 2015

Today How to Help Your Child with Math Homework August 27, 2015

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What Do the New AzMERIT Test Results Mean for My Child

August 28, 2015 by Expect More Arizona

Why Attendance Matters September 1, 2015 by Expect More Arizona

Showing up for school has a huge impact on a student's academic success starting in kindergarten and continuing through high school. Even as...

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Viewpoints: What low AzMERIT scores really mean August 31, 2015 by Pearl Chang Esau and Thomas Franz

How, which is still on the way in the Arizona...

Arizona PTA everychild.onevoice.

ARIZONA EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

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Last spring, Arizona students took AzMERIT, the new statewide achievement test which replaced AIMS in reading, writing and math. Although testing is never fun, assessments can be effective tools to support your child's learning. They can tell you and your child's

Parents Need to Hear How Our Kids Are Doing

More Videos by Expect More Arizona Previous Next



Expect More Arizona

When you take your child to the doctor, you understand how vital it is to get a complete diagnosis of how your child is doing so you can work together to ensure a healthy and happy future for your family. It's equally important for you and your child's teachers to get a thorough report of your child's academic well-being to make sure that he or she is ready to succeed in the next year and beyond. Learn how Arizona schools are getting better information on your child's performance at ArizonaAimsHigher.org/AZMERIT.

Shared with: Public

21,974 Views

Embed Video

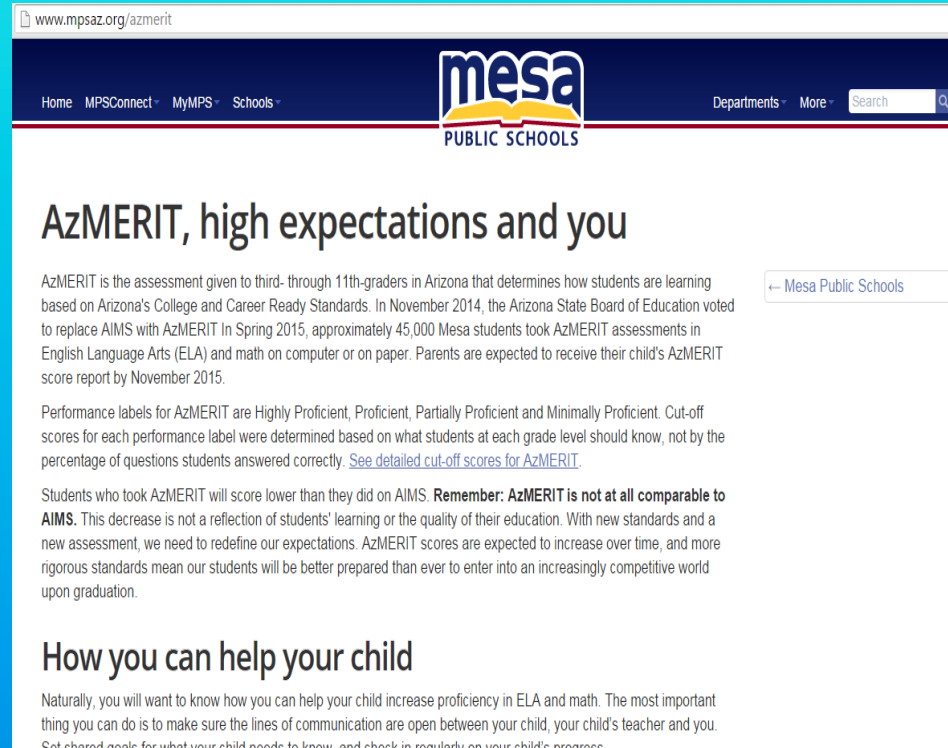
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<http://bit.ly/AzMERITFactSheet> <http://bit.ly/AzMERITwebinar> <http://bit.ly/AZCheckUp>
<http://www.expectmorearizona.org/arizona-aims-higher/resources/parents-families/>

Mesa Schools Resources

On our website we will have:

- Parent video
- Teacher video & FAQ
- Trifold brochure
- Spanish translations of the Family Report wording
- Other materials as developed



The screenshot shows the Mesa Public Schools website at the URL www.mpsaz.org/azmerit. The header includes navigation links for Home, MPSConnect, MyMPS, and Schools, along with a search bar and a link to Departments. The main heading is "AzMERIT, high expectations and you". The text explains that AzMERIT is an assessment for third- through 11th-graders in Arizona, replacing AIMS in November 2014. It notes that approximately 45,000 Mesa students took the assessment in Spring 2015. Performance labels are listed as Highly Proficient, Proficient, Partially Proficient, and Minimally Proficient. A warning states: "Remember: AzMERIT is not at all comparable to AIMS." The section "How you can help your child" encourages parents to ensure communication with their child's teacher and to set shared goals for their child's progress.

- How were the performance levels established?
- Were the results expected?
- What will the Family Reports look like?
- What resources are available for communicating with families, teachers, & students?

Questions? Comments?

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