



Forward Exam

2025-26 Information for Families

What is the Wisconsin Forward Exam?

The Wisconsin Forward Exam is designed to gauge how well students are doing in relation to the Wisconsin Academic Standards. These standards outline what students should know and be able to do, in order to meet grade level expectations and be on track for future learning. The Forward Exam is administered online in the spring of each school year for students in:

- grades 3-8 in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics,
- grades 4 and 8 in science, and
- grades 4, 8, and 10 in social studies.

Accommodations and supports for students with disabilities and English learners are built into the system so that the progress of students can be accurately measured.



What does this mean for my child?

The Forward Exam is a summative assessment that provides a broad measure of your child's achievement in the content areas tested. The results provide one measure of achievement and should be used along with local measures

such as report cards, school-wide assessments, and other information about your child's progress in school.

When does the Forward Exam take place?

The Forward Exam will be given to students in schools between March 16 and April 24, 2026. Districts and schools choose their own testing dates within this window.



The estimated time for test administration in each grade is approximately:

- 125 minutes for ELA,
- 90-115 minutes for mathematics,
- 105 minutes for science, and
- 70 minutes for social studies.

These estimated times are for the purpose of scheduling, as **the Forward Exam is not a timed test**. It is important to note that students may take more time or less time to complete the test based on effort and ability levels.

What type of scores will be provided?

Students receive a score based on their performance in each content area. Each score will fall in one of four levels:

Advanced - The student demonstrates a thorough understanding of the knowledge and skills described in the Wisconsin Academic Standards for their grade level and is on-track for future learning.

Meeting - The student is meeting the knowledge and skill expectations described in the Wisconsin Academic Standards for their grade-level and is on-track for future learning.

Approaching - The student is approaching the knowledge and skill expectations described in the Wisconsin Academic Standards for their grade-level needed to be on-track for future learning.

Developing - The student is at the beginning stages of developing the knowledge and skills described in the Wisconsin Academic Standards at their grade-level needed to be on-track for future learning.



Where can I find sample or practice test questions?

The Forward Exam Practice Test provides students, families, and educators, with a sample of the type of content and questions students will encounter on the Forward Exam. Students should use the Practice Test to familiarize themselves with the question formats and online testing platform, including



the tools available to them during testing. The Practice Test is not scored and does not cover the full range of content on the exam. The Practice Test is approximately two-thirds the length of the actual Forward Exam and is intended to provide all students with the opportunity to become comfortable with the Forward Exam platform prior to testing.

The Forward Exam Practice Test is available for student use online, in the classroom or at home at

<http://dpi.wi.gov/assessment/forward/sample-items>.

For more information about the Forward Exam contact the Office of Educational Accountability at osamail@dpi.wi.gov or visit <https://dpi.wi.gov/assessment/forward>.