

# Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System Family Reports Interpretive Guide



## Understanding Your Child's Test Scores 2015–2016 School Year

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*Disclaimer: The data in the Family Report sample are for display purposes only and do not represent actual results. The student's name on the sample is fictitious, and any similarity to an actual student name is purely coincidental.*

### What Is the DCAS – Alt1?

The DCAS – Alt1 is designed to measure the performance of students with significant intellectual disabilities against the Delaware Content Standards Grade Band Extensions, but at a less-complex level than the general statewide assessments.

The DCAS – Alt1 replaces the Delaware Alternate Portfolio Assessment (DAPA), aligning the alternate assessment to the DCAS, the new general education test. The DCAS – Alt1 represents a major improvement in our state assessment program, offering scoring based upon accuracy of student responses and a mechanism to measure what students know, understand, and can do. It also offers educators immediate reporting of their students' Reading, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies test results.

In the 2015–2016 school year, Reading and Mathematics were administered in the spring in grades 3–10.

Also in the spring, a Science test was administered in grades 5, 8, and 10, and a Social Studies test was administered in grades 4, 7, and 9.

### What is the DCAS – Alt1?

Grade	Subject
3	Reading & Mathematics
4	Reading, Mathematics, & Social Studies
5	Reading, Mathematics, & Science
6	Reading & Mathematics
7	Reading, Mathematics, & Social Studies
8	Reading, Mathematics, & Science
9	Reading, Mathematics, & Social Studies
10	Reading, Mathematics, & Science

**Cover Letter** The front page of your child's score report includes an important letter from the Delaware Secretary of Education summarizing the contents of the report and encouraging you to be an active participant in your child's education.

### Dear Parent/Guardian,

I am pleased to provide you with this report on Edward's performance on the Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System's Alternate Assessment (DCAS-Alt1) for Reading, Mathematics, and Science for the 2015-2016 school year. This report shows your child's score and proficiency level for each area that the assessment covers. It explains what students scoring at the same level as your child typically know and can do in reading, mathematics, and science.

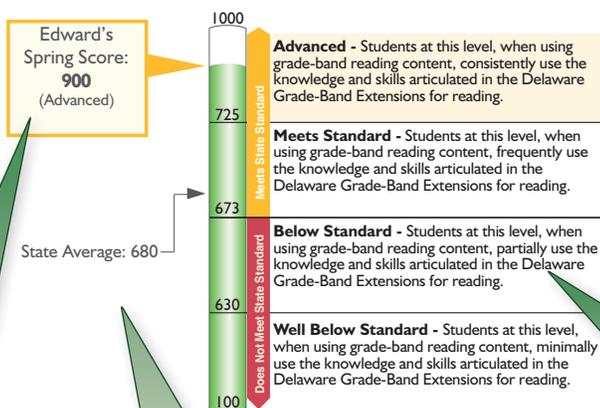
This assessment is designed to be appropriate for the specific learning needs of your child. It is an important component of the state's assessment system, offering immediate feedback for educators and evaluations of student growth over the course of the year. I invite you to review this report with Edward and reach out to his teacher to discuss how you can be involved.

Sincerely,



Steven H. Godowsky, Secretary of Education

### How did Edward do on the Reading Assessment?



Edward scored in the Advanced range. Students who score in this range should be able to:

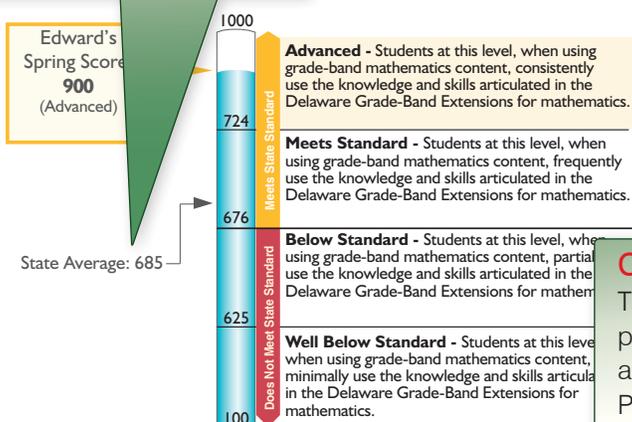
- determine the theme of a literary passage;
- determine the main idea of an informational passage;
- use language strategies to identify the meanings of unknown words and phrases;
- compare and contrast story elements;
- use text structure to identify different parts of a story and sequence events;
- demonstrate command of English grammar.

**Your Child's Score** Inside the report, you will see your child's Reading and Mathematics scores. Science or Social Studies test results will also be reported if your child was eligible for that test this school year.

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**Performance Levels** If your child's score is in the Advanced or Meets Standard score range in a subject, then your child has met Delaware's content standards for that subject. If your child's score is in the Below Standard or Well Below Standard range, then your child did not meet Delaware's proficiency standards for that subject in this administration of DCAS – Alt1.

**Comparison Scores** Your child's score is compared with the average score for the state of Delaware for that grade-band.



To see the complete grade-band specific performance level descriptions and expectations, please visit the Delaware Department of Education Mathematics PLDs at <http://de.portal.airast.org/resources/dcas-alt1/>.

Edward scored in the Advanced range. Students who score in this range should be able to:

- generate and extend a number sequence;
- round a decimal to the nearest whole number;
- multiply and divide up to using repeated addition and subtraction strategies or objects.

### Condensed Performance Level Descriptions

The condensed performance level descriptions provide parents with information on what students at a particular proficiency level know and are able to do. Parents can access the complete grade-band and grade-level specific descriptions and expectations using the link below the student barrel chart to the left.

### Mathematics Categories Being Assessed in Grades Three Through Five

#### Operations and Algebraic Thinking

Operations and Algebraic Thinking skills focus on applying properties of operations, modeling and solving problems, and generating and extending patterns.

#### Number and Operations – Base Ten

Number and Operations in Base Ten skills focus on extending number knowledge and applying place value properties to perform arithmetic and compare numbers.

#### Measurement and Data

Measurement and Data skills focus on telling time, using money, measuring and estimating lengths, understanding area and perimeter, and interpreting data.

#### Geometry

Geometry skills focus on identifying, comparing, creating, and classifying shapes; analyzing their area and volume; and working with coordinate planes.

#### Number and Operations – Fractions

Number and Operations – Fractions skills focus on developing understanding of fractions and applying properties of operations to fractions.

### Next Steps for Edward Based on His Performance This Year

Work on reinforcing adding and subtracting fractions with like denominators and determining the amount of money necessary for purchasing items. Encourage Edward to help you do activities that involve solving simple addition and subtraction problems with fractions. For example, when you are cooking or baking, ask him to assist you in measuring the ingredients required for the recipe.

Use everyday events to encourage Edward to develop his decision-making skills by deriving a conclusion based on provided information. For example, help him read weather reports to determine whether he can wear shorts the next day or will need a jacket or umbrella.

Talk to Edward's teacher about other ways in which you can help Edward or ask about homework that Edward can do to extend classroom learning to your home.

**Reporting Categories Assessed** The reporting categories section describes what areas were tested for each subject administered. Three categories are assessed in Reading. Standards assessed in Mathematics vary by grade-band: five are assessed in grades 3–5, six in grades 6–8, and three in grades 9–10. Eight categories are assessed in Science and four in Social Studies.

**Next Steps** The next steps recommendations are based on your child's overall subject performance level. This section provides information on activities you can do with your child to build on strengths and alleviate weaknesses in the subjects assessed.

## Glossary of Terms/Definitions

**Performance Level:** A proficiency level that corresponds to a score range determined by groups of Delaware educators and parents

**Performance Level Descriptors:** Detailed explanations of the proficiencies and skills that correspond to each performance level for each grade/grade-band and subject

**Reporting Category:** A content subset within a subject

**Score:** A numerical value that is on a common scale so that children's scores can be compared over multiple test administrations

**Standards:** Grade-band (Reading and Mathematics) or grade-level (Science or Social Studies) content that is assessed for accountability purposes

## Frequently Asked Questions

### How do IEP teams know which assessment is most appropriate?

The alternate assessment is designed for students with the most significant intellectual disabilities who cannot meaningfully participate in the general assessment even with accommodations. IEP teams should consider the needs of the student, the focus of his or her instruction, and the requirements of each assessment method. Decisions should not be based on the student's disability, school program or performance on the general assessment.

### Does my child have to be assessed?

Yes, federal regulations require that all students be included in state and district-wide assessments. Each year, parents/guardians, along with the other members of the IEP team, will decide whether a student will participate in the general assessment (DCAS and Smarter Summative) or the alternate assessment (DCAS – Alt1) based on his or her individual student profile.

### What areas of instruction will be assessed?

Reading and Mathematics will be assessed in the spring for students in grades 3 through 11. Science (grades 5, 8, 10) and Social Studies (grades 4, 7, 9) will be assessed once in the spring.

### How will students be assessed?

Students respond to test items during a one-on-one testing situation using their mode of communication (e.g., oral response, a response card, eye gaze, pointing, sign language, augmentative communication device). Two types of scripted test items are used: engagement (teacher rates the student's level of involvement) or scaffolded (multiple opportunities to answer).

### What happens if my child does not perform well on the assessment?

There are no consequences for students who do not meet the standard on the alternate assessment. Your child's teacher will continue to work with your child to provide access to the general education curriculum and develop skills.

### Where can I get more information about DCAS – Alt1 and my child's performance?

You can discuss this report with your child's teacher. You can also visit [www.deaccessproject.org](http://www.deaccessproject.org).

The DDOE provides multiple options for students with disabilities on the state assessment. Students may take the general assessment with accommodations, or students with significant cognitive disabilities may take an alternate assessment if the IEP team agrees to the criteria outlined on the Participation Guidelines. There are two types of alternate assessment: Selected Response (DCAS-Alt1) or Portfolio Alternate Assessment. The Portfolio Alternate Assessment is designed for students taking the alternate assessment who have extensive communication needs. For your student to be considered for the Portfolio Alternate Assessment, a written request must be submitted to the school according to the timelines outlined on the Participation Guidelines. More information on state assessment options is available through your student's school.

## Additional Resources

### DCAS – Alt1 Information and Parent Resources

<http://de.portal.airast.org>