R.I. DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION
Shepard Building
255 Westminster Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

Rhode Island Next Generation Science Assessment (NGSA) Reporting FAQ

Updated November 2019

What is the Next Generation Science Assessment for?

- The NGSA helps us understand how all our students are performing in Science by assessing their knowledge of our state standards, the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS).
- When current students graduate from high school, more jobs will require skills in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) than in the past.
- The NGSS provide a strong science education that equips students with the ability to think critically, analyze information, and solve complex problems — the skills needed to pursue opportunities within and beyond STEM fields.
- We can successfully prepare students for college, careers and citizenship when we set the right expectations and goals and monitor student progress towards them.

What grades and topics are assessed for NGSA?

- NGSA Assesses students' understanding of the Next Generation Science Standards in grades 5, 8, and 11.
- NGSA assessments assess life sciences, physical sciences, and earth space sciences.

When are students tested?

- Testing window dates.

What do the students do during the assessment?

- Students take an online computer-based test that includes item clusters which are similar to performance task and stand-alone items. There are two sixty-minute sessions, but students are provided additional time if needed.
- All items ask students to use science and engineering practices and apply their understanding of disciplinary core ideas and crosscutting concepts to make sense out of real-world phenomena.

Are there practice questions available?

- Practice Tests are available for grades 5, 8, and 11 level. The practice tests include a small sample of standalone items and item clusters and are intended to be used to help students understand the functionality of the testing system.
- Practice Tests are available on the RI Next Generation Science Assessment Portal.
    - Technical skills required
    - RI NGSA Portal

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How do I view student performance?

- The general public may view aggregate performance data by visiting the RIDE Public Reporting page. Information is available on state, district and school level performance.
- Teachers and administrators can login to view their students' results in the AIRways reporting portal. The portal also contains manuals for navigating the portal and exporting results.
- Test Coordinators in each school will need to create or revise rosters by science teacher so that teachers are able to view the performance of students they taught. If this is not done, teachers will not see rosters, or they will see rosters by the name of the testing administrator.
- **Important – the system defaults to display the students where they are as of day you log in. For this reason, many of you will have to update the Reporting Time Period. For example, a principal whose 5th grade students transitioned to the middle school will need to update the date to reflect the previous school year in order to see their 5th grade student results. To do this, the educator should go to the upper right <My Settings> choose <Change Reporting Time Period>** to choose a date when all students were registered such as, June 1.

What are the score ranges for NGSA?

Next Generation Science Assessment

The cut (or threshold) scores for Levels 1, 2, 3, and 4 were developed by RI & VT educators and were adopted by the RI DOE and VT AOE August 2019.

Grades	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
5	1-37	38-59	60-71	72-120
8	1-37	38-59	60-74	75-120
11	1-35	36-59	60-70	71-120

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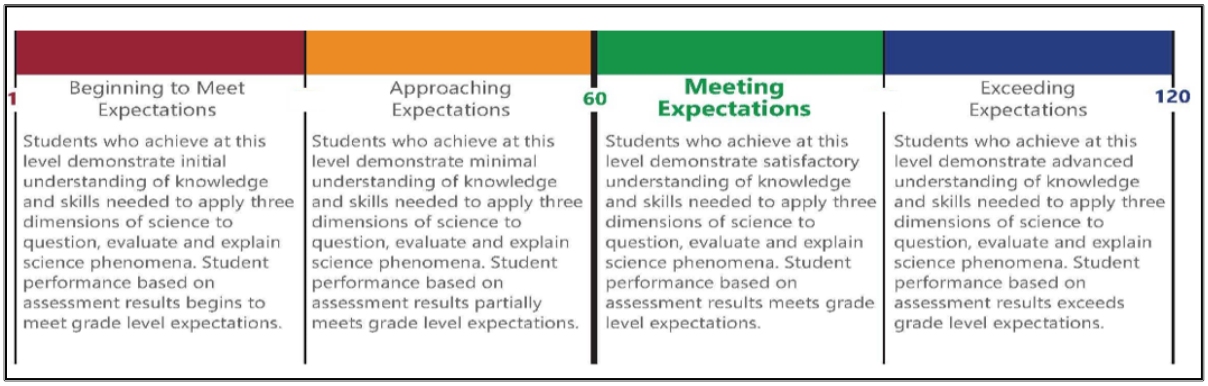
RIDE Rhode Island Department of Education

- **Student, school, district, and state results can be described by the overall performance levels in determining proficiency overall.**



- **The NGSA uses three performance levels to describe how well individual students perform in each of the science domains.**

How Did Your Student Perform in the Different Areas of Science?	
Life Sciences 	Your student can sometimes model life cycles and movement of matter in ecosystems; use evidence to explain that organisms need structures to live; and interpret data to show that individuals inherit traits, populations have many different traits, and some organisms thrive in specific environments.
Physical Sciences 	Your student can sometimes conduct experiments to explain the structure of matter, signs of chemical change, and how forces affect the motion of objects; use evidence to explain speed and energy transfer; and model particles of matter and light waves.
Earth and Space Sciences 	Your student can sometimes display data to show the results of Earth's movements around the sun; graph where fresh and salt water exist on Earth; model interactions of the geosphere, biosphere, hydrosphere, and atmosphere; and use evidence to analyze solutions to hazards caused by weather.

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How were the cut scores determined for the NGSA Achievement Levels?

- In August of 2019 RI and VT science educators convened in New Hampshire with the purpose of developing cut score recommendations corresponding to each performance level (e.g., Level 2, Level 3) for grades 5, 8, and 11
- RI and VT State educators participated by grade level
- Participants were chosen to carefully represent the state demographic of educators for school settings including, classroom teachers, science coaches, curriculum specialists, etc.
- Process: Orientation to test development and achievement level setting process, Taking the online test, examining the Achievement Level Descriptors (ALDs), 3 rounds of ratings using an Ordered Item Booklet (OIB).

- The RI Department of Education and VT Education Agency approved cut scores for reporting purposes.

How can I find out what is on the NGSA?

- The Test Design and Item Specifications documents are available and are posted on the science assessment webpage. The documents describe how the clusters (stimulus and item sets) and standalone items for the NGSA are developed. They include a technical description of the assessment that ensures the assessment will measure the science standards. The documents also contain information for each performance expectation (PE) including possible task demands of how the PEs could be assessed on the NGSA.
    - NGSA Test Item Specs

What formative assessment resources are available that can help teachers' measure progress toward learning the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) as assessed on the NGSA?

- Several tools by Achieve and STEM Teaching Tools can be used by teachers to ensure 3-dimensional formative and summative assessments are a part of their comprehensive assessment system.
    - NGSS Assessment Resources

How can I get involved in science assessment development?

- Science educators throughout Rhode Island are encouraged to participate in collaborative learning communities such as 3-Dimenssional formative and summative assessment development, Content Review, and Content Review with data. Please consider applying for one or more annual science assessment work groups when they are announced in the field memo or visit RIDE's NGSS Assessment page .

For more information please contact Erin Escher at erin.escher@ride.ri.gov.