

Arkansas

Arkansas Comprehensive Assessment Program

Part I: Policy Trends

Type of test	End-of-course (EOC)
Purpose	<p>The purpose of the tests is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine prospective high school graduates' knowledge and skill levels relative to those needed for entry-level employment • Determine prospective high school graduates' knowledge and skill levels relative to those needed for postsecondary education • Determine prospective high school graduates' mastery of the state curriculum • Encourage districts and schools to identify and serve students at risk of academic failure • Provide data to state policymakers on student attainment of state education goals to inform educational policy decisions • Increase alignment of local curriculum and programs of instruction with state education standards • Promote equity of opportunity across all student groups • Meet a state mandate
Major changes in exit exam policy since the 2007-08 school year or any pending changes	<p>Act 1307 of 2009 mandates the development and implementation of only two high-stakes end-of-course assessments: Algebra I and English II. Beginning in the 2009-10 school year, all students enrolled in Algebra I must score at the pass level on the Algebra I end-of-course examination in order to receive credit for the course. Beginning in the 2013-14 school year, all students enrolled in English II must score at the pass level on the English II end-of-course examination in order to receive credit for the course. Students who do not pass the initial high-stakes assessments will receive two additional retest opportunities before participating in a formative strand analysis remediation and taking an alternative form of the tests.</p>
Status of the state's decision regarding the Common Core State Standards and impact of that decision on exit exam policies	<p>In July 2010, the state board of education adopted the Common Core State Standards for mathematics and for English language arts and social studies/history, science, and technical subjects. These standards will not be implemented during the 2010-11 school year, but in accordance with an implementation plan currently under development.</p>

Test used by colleges or universities for undergraduate admission?	No
Year first administered	The Algebra I end-of-course examination was first given in the 2000-01 school year but became a high-stakes assessment beginning in the 2009-10 school year. The English II end-of-course examination will not be operational until the 2013-14 school year.
Year diplomas first withheld	The high-stakes requirements for Algebra I began with all students in grades 9 or below in the 2009-10 school year who have not already obtained credit for Algebra I. Students who did not obtain the requisite pass scale score on the initial administration of the Algebra I EOC will have multiple opportunities to retest. Therefore, no diplomas have yet been withheld.
	Act 1307 of 2009 mandated the development and implementation of only two high-stakes end-of-course assessments: Algebra I and English II. Beginning in the 2009-10 school year, all students enrolled in Algebra I must score at the pass level on the Algebra I end-of-course examination in order to receive credit for the course. Beginning in the 2013-14 school year, all students enrolled in English II must score at the pass level on the English II end-of-course examination in order to receive credit for the course. Students who do not pass the initial high-stakes assessments will receive two additional retest opportunities before participating in a formative strand analysis remediation and taking an alternative form of the tests. Geometry and biology are considered general end-of-course assessments under Act 1307 of 2009 and do not contain the high-stakes pass requirement.
Subjects tested	Algebra I, English II (2013-14)
Types of questions	Multiple choice, constructed response for all assessments
Grade first administered	This varies based upon the student's completion of the course. Generally, the Algebra I end-of-course examination is not administered to students prior to Grade 7; however, there are exceptions to this practice.
	Please note that the high-stakes component for the Algebra I is phased in beginning in the 2009-10 school year. Act 1307 of 2009 mandates that any student who is in grade 9 or below

	<p>during the 2009-10 school year and has not previously completed and obtained academic credit for Algebra I shall be administered the Algebra I end-of-course by the end of 10th grade and must obtain the requisite pass scale score established by the state board of education in order to receive academic credit for the course.</p>
Grade(s) exam aligned to	The Algebra I EOC Examination is aligned to the Algebra I course framework, which is part of the 2004 Arkansas Mathematics Curriculum Framework.
Number of retakes allowed before the end of grade 12	<p>Under the current law (applicable in 2009-10), students have three chances to retake before graduation. Again, this is based only on Algebra I, geometry, and biology. Proposed legislation may be filed during the current state legislative session, which would alter some of the existing conditions.</p> <p>Act 1307 of 2009 replaced the previous legislation in effect. As mandated in Act 1307, students who do not pass the initial high-stakes assessments in Algebra I and English II will receive two additional retest opportunities before participating in a formative strand analysis remediation and taking an alternative form of the tests.</p>
Retakes after grade 12	Act 1307 of 2009 does not limit the number of times for which the student may participate in the formative strand analysis remediation and take the alternative form of the high-stakes tests.
Does the state have reciprocity with other states?	Pursuant to Act 1307 of 2009, any student transferring into an Arkansas public school on or after 2009-10 for Algebra I or 2013-14 for English II who can demonstrate by official transcript from an out-of-state public, private, or home school, or an Arkansas private or home school that he or she has previously obtained academic credit for Algebra I or English II is not required to participate in and receive academic credit from an initial high-stakes end-of-course assessment unless the public school district assesses the student's educational status and determines the student does not possess the requisite passing knowledge of Algebra I or English II.
Exit exam used for No Child Left Behind?	Yes
Same cut score for graduation and NCLB?	Pursuant to Act 1307 of 2009, the requisite scale score for any high-stakes end-of-course assessment shall be set only at the

cut score necessary to demonstrate the minimum satisfactory passing level for that subject. This cut score is separate from what is reported for No Child Left Behind.

The state board of education shall establish the requisite passing scale score for the Algebra I and English II end-of-course examinations. The Algebra I pass scale score was approved by the state board of education in December 2009, and the English II pass scale score will be established at a later date.

Evaluations of the state exit exam

The state works with the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), which monitors, evaluates, and advises the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) on the EOC examinations. The Technical Advisory Committee is giving ongoing evaluative feedback on all assessments to ADE throughout the annual cycle. There is no public report available.

State test contractor

Questar Assessment, Incorporated

Does the state provide students with alternate paths to graduation?

Pursuant to Act 1307 of 2009, any student eligible for a high-stakes end-of-course assessment shall not obtain academic credit for the course until the student obtains the requisite pass scale score set by the state board on the high-stakes end-of-course assessment OR obtains the requisite score established by state board rule on an alternative assessment. An alternative assessment shall be an ACT assessment, SAT assessment, advanced placement test, or International Baccalaureate test. Additionally, if a student with disabilities identified under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq. is unable to meet the requirements of this section because of the nature of the student's disabilities, the student may graduate from high school by demonstrating alternative competencies or alternative levels of competency under the student's individualized education program.

Alternate paths to graduation specifically for English language learners

Specific details on alternate paths to graduation for English language learners are still under consideration by the state.

Accommodations are available for English language learners. Allowable accommodations include: extended time, word-to-word dictionary, individualized schedule, preferential seating, small group testing, individual testing, reading of the math/writing/science test in English, and noise buffers.

Alternate paths to graduation

Students with disabilities may graduate based on their

specifically for students with disabilities

individualized education plan.

Accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Allowable accommodations include: transcribing, recording, signing directions, preferential seating, small group testing, individual testing, reading of the math/writing/science test, magnifying devices, noise buffers, individualized schedule, extended time, large print test, Braille test, and abacus.

Who makes decisions on whether a student is eligible to use alternate paths?

Information is not available, as specific details on this alternate path are still under consideration by the state.

How are students identified as eligible for alternate paths to graduate?

Pursuant to Act 1307 of 2009, the superintendent of each public school district shall be responsible for the proper administration of all assessments and those the rules promulgated by the state board to implement the requirements of the Arkansas Annotated Code relating to the Arkansas Comprehensive Testing, Assessment, and Accountability Program.

When calculating the graduation rate for adequate yearly progress (AYP) purposes, does the state count students taking alternate paths together with graduates who passed the high school exit exams?

Information is not available, as specific details on this alternate path are still under consideration by the state.

How many full-time equivalent staff in the state department of education are involved in implementing alternate paths?

Information is not available, as specific details on this alternate path are still under consideration by the state.

Types of assistance the state provides for all districts to raise *initial* pass rates for all students on the high school exit exam

Various types of technical assistance are currently under consideration by the state but are undetermined at this time. Pass rates will not be applicable until the 2009-10 school year.

Types of assistance or remediation the state provides for all districts to help students who have failed to pass the exit exam

Pursuant to Act 1307 of 2009, any student who does not meet the requisite scale score on the relevant high-stakes end-of-course assessment shall participate in an individualized academic improvement plan. An individualized academic improvement plan shall include research-based remediation

activities and multiple opportunities for the student to take and pass subsequent high-stakes end-of-course assessments as long as the student remains enrolled in an Arkansas public school and has not reached 21 years of age.

If after two subsequent high-stakes end-of-course assessments a student does not meet the requisite scale score on the initial high-stakes end-of-course assessment, the student shall participate in strand analysis or formative analysis remediation provided and supported by the state department of education before taking a third or subsequent high-stakes end-of-course assessment. Subsequent high-stakes end-of-course assessments and associated remediation programs may be administered in an electronic format.

For any student required to participate in an individualized academic improvement plan for a high-stakes assessment, the individualized academic improvement plan shall identify the student’s specific areas of deficiency on the high-stakes end-of-course exam assessment, the desired levels of performance necessary for the student to meet the satisfactory pass levels, and the instructional and support services to be provided to meet the desired levels of performance. A public school also shall provide frequent monitoring of the student's progress in meeting the desired levels of performance.

Does the state provide funding for remediation? No

Are districts mandated by law to provide remediation? Yes, under Act 1307 of the 87th Arkansas General Assembly

Are students required to participate in remediation? All students who do not obtain the requisite pass scale score on the Algebra I EOC exam (beginning in the 2009-10 school year) or the English II EOC exam (beginning in the 2013-14 school year) must participate in remediation through an Individualized Academic Improvement Plan (IAIP).

Part II: Student Performance

Initial pass rates, 2009-10

Percentage of Students Passing Exit Exam on First Attempt, 2009-10	
Student Group	Algebra I
All students	93%

White	96%
African American	83%
Hispanic	91%
Asian	97%
Native American	92%
English language learners	85%
Migrant	86%
Students with disabilities	72%
Free or reduced-price lunch eligible	90%
Passing score	(Scale Score 159)

Note: Data provided by the state department of education.

Denominator used when calculating these rates: The number of students who were administered the high-stakes assessment

Student Group	2008-09	2009-10
All students	83.4%	NA
White	83.1%	NA
African American	76.2%	NA
Latino	77.2%	NA
Asian	89.9%	NA
Native American	81.9%	NA
English language learners	74.4%	NA
Migrant	79.2%	NA
Students with disabilities	73.3%	NA
Free or reduced-price lunch eligible	90.2%	NA

Note: Data provided by the state department of education.

Current state graduation rate calculation formula for AYP purposes

Arkansas does not use the Leaver Rate or the Adjusted Cohort Rate.

Arkansas calculates the graduation rate by first calculating each grade's completion rate ($1 - (\text{\#dropouts}/\text{\#enrolled})$), multiplying the 4 grades' completion rates together, and then multiplying that number by 100.