



## **Guidelines for Interpreting the Achievement Test**

*Multiyear Reports*

Achievement test results provide only part of the overall picture of the province's, a school authority's, or a school's performance. Although provincial assessments are designed to assess the achievement of provincial standards, many important learning outcomes cannot be measured by time-limited paper-and-pencil tests. In addition, the interpretation of achievement test results involves considering many factors that contribute to achievement. The local school and school authority are in the best position to accurately interpret, use, and communicate provincial assessment results for the school or school authority. For this reason, information about school or school authority results should be obtained from the school or school authority. To receive more detailed information on the calculation and use of these data please contact Ken Marcellus, Director of Achievement Testing Program & Document Production and Design, or Nicole Lamarre, Director of French Assessment Program, Assessment, at (780) 427-0010, toll free at 310-0000 or by email at [Ken.Marcellus@gov.ab.ca](mailto:Ken.Marcellus@gov.ab.ca) or [Nicole.Lamarre@gov.ab.ca](mailto:Nicole.Lamarre@gov.ab.ca)

1. When reading this table, note the number of students who wrote the test. The fewer the students, the more carefully the information must be interpreted, as overall results for small groups can be greatly influenced by the scores of one or two individuals. Look at the percentage of students who wrote the test. If more than 10% of students did not write, these results may not be representative of the total school or school authority. The percentage of students in the "Absent" category includes students who were absent at the time of testing, or who wrote but whose results were withheld. For English Language Arts, this category also includes students who wrote only one part of the test. **Results on provincial assessments for individual students and for groups of fewer than six students are not publicly released.**
2. Because the difficulty of the test varies slightly from year to year and to facilitate the comparison of student performance over time, Alberta Education adjusts the cut-scores that define the Acceptable Standard and the Standard of Excellence each year. This makes it possible to identify trends in the percentage of students meeting standards across the five years of 2006-2007 to 2010-2011 for subjects where the curriculum and standards have remained the same.
3. For school authorities with new boundaries, the statistics have been recalculated based on those schools that were within the new boundaries at the time of testing.
4. Form 1 of Grades 6 and 9 Social Studies reflected learning outcomes specified in the 1989 or 1990 Program of Studies. Form 2 was a new test that reflected the 2007 Program of Studies. In 2009, the new test was phased in while the old test was phased out. The provincial results reported for each of the forms may not be representative of all students in the province. Therefore,

discretion must be used when comparing the school authority/school results against the provincial results or comparing results over time. Standards for the new test were set in 2010 and on the total test only.

5. Form 1 of Grades 3, 6 and 9 Mathematics was an old test that reflected the 1996/1997 Program of Studies. Form 2 was a new test that reflected the 2007 Program of Studies. In 2010, the new test was phased in while the old test was phased out. The provincial results reported for each of the forms may not be representative of all students in the province. Therefore, discretion must be used when comparing the school authority/school results against the provincial results or comparing results over time. Standards for the new test were set in 2011 and on the total test only.