



Yukon Koyukuk School District
Administrative & Support Offices
4762 Old Airport Way
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709

Kerry Boyd
Superintendent
kboyd@yksd.com

Telephone: (907) 374-9400
Fax: (907) 374-9440

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Dear YKSD and Raven Parents and Guardians,

Now that the State Department of Education has announced plans to seek a new assessment for English Language Arts and Mathematics for the spring of 2017, you may be asking, "Why should my child take AMP?" While both state and federal law require an annual assessment, there are other important reasons for students to take the AMP tests this year. Below is information for your review.

- **Two years of data:** The most important reason to take AMP in 2016 is that parents, teachers, schools, and districts will have two years of information about student achievement relative to the new content standards. The student scores for 2016 will be based on the same content that was assessed in 2015, so data from the two assessments will be comparable. The data will show progress toward meeting the new standards by students, schools and districts.
- **Revised AMP reports:** Revised AMP reports for 2016 will include more detailed information on ELA and mathematics topic areas. The student reports will also include two years of AMP results.
- **Instructional support:** Students participating in the AMP test will have more exposure to the types of questions that measure deeper understanding of the standards and more complex skills. Information from student results will help teachers and schools provide instruction that meets the needs of their students.
- **Listening questions:** Listening questions are being field tested this year. Taking the listening items will give students experience in responding to listening questions.

An informative handout accompanies this letter. Please don't hesitate to contact your principal if you would like additional information.

Sincerely,

Kerry Boyd
Superintendent



Alaska Measures of Progress (AMP) 2016

Why should my child take AMP?

What is my child tested on in the spring?

Each spring schools give the state assessment to students in grades 3 – 10. This test gives students the opportunity to show their understanding of important skills in English language arts and math at their grade level.

Does my child have to take the standardized test?

Schools are required to test all students in order to provide information to parents, teachers, and districts about the learning of each student as well as the performance of the school and district. Parents have the right to make educational decisions for their child; please check with your district for the local procedure for documenting non-participation.

I heard AMP was not the state test anymore. Is this true?

Alaska is seeking alternatives to our current assessment for the 2016-2017 school year and beyond. This new assessment will also measure the Alaska English Language Arts and Math Standards. It will build on the two years of student learning information provided by AMP and be an important next step in Alaska's work to prepare students for opportunities after high school graduation.

If it is not going to be the test anymore, why should my child take it this year?

This spring will be the second time Alaskan students take the Alaska Measures of Progress (AMP) assessment. You and your child's teachers will be able to compare your child's score last year with their score this year. AMP scores, local tests, grades, and classroom projects combine to provide a full picture of a student's knowledge and skills. This information is used by schools as part of their preparation to provide instruction that meets your child's academic needs.

Taking the AMP assessment this spring also provides your child with an opportunity to experience the types of questions that measure the complex skills included in Alaska's standards.

What has been done to fix the problems with AMP for this spring?

The main problem with the AMP test in 2015 was the lack of information on the reports. Revised AMP reports for 2016 will include more detailed information on ELA and mathematics topic areas, such as "operations and algebraic thinking" in math and "word meanings" in language arts. Student reports will also include two years of AMP results.

More information about AMP can be found at education.alaska.gov/akassessments/#c3gtabs-amp