



To: Indiana State Board of Education

From: Lynn Schemel, Deputy Chief Academic Officer

Date: August 11, 2026

Subject: ILEARN Through-Year Assessment Standard Setting and Recommended Cut Scores

The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) requests review and approval of the recommended cut scores for ILEARN Mathematics and English/language arts (ELA) for grades 3-8 and Social Studies for grade 5.

Two new state laws required updates to ILEARN, as well as setting new ILEARN cut scores. House Enrolled Act (HEA) 1251 (2022) required the streamlining and prioritization of K-12 academic standards in core content areas. This required the redesign of ILEARN to align with these streamlined, prioritized standards. Following feedback from educators and parents, HEA 1243 (2024) also provided for the redesign of ILEARN from a summative to a through-year assessment, including three checkpoints and a shortened summative assessment.

IDOE completed a research-based standard setting process to determine cut scores for the ILEARN Through-Year Assessment (TYA) for Mathematics (grades 3-8), ELA (grades 3-8), and Social Studies (grade 5) with educator committee meetings. The ILEARN TYA is Indiana's accountability assessment for grades 3-8 and was updated to a new design in Spring 2026 for Mathematics and ELA. ILEARN Social Studies remains a Summative assessment only. These recommended cut scores reflect the content and rigor of the Indiana Academic Standards (IAS) and are the result of a panel of educators guided by technical experts in the standard setting process.

The current policy proficiency level descriptors (PLDs) for all ILEARN content areas will remain in effect. The policy PLDs were previously established and approved by the ILEARN Policy and Content Standard Setting Committees and adopted by SBOE in July 2018 and are provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Indiana Policy Performance Level Descriptors for ILEARN Assessments

Below Proficiency	Indiana students below proficiency have not met current grade level standards. Students may require significant support to develop the knowledge, application, and analytical skills needed to be on track for college and career readiness.
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Approaching Proficiency	Indiana students approaching proficiency have nearly met current grade level standards by demonstrating some basic knowledge, application, and limited analytical skills. Students may require support to be on track for college and career readiness.
At Proficiency	Indiana students at proficiency have met current grade level standards by demonstrating essential knowledge, application, and analytical skills to be on track for college and career readiness.
Above Proficiency	Indiana students above proficiency have mastered current grade level standards by demonstrating more complex knowledge, application, and analytical skills to be on track for college and career readiness.

The ILEARN Standard Setting committees reviewed required content as described in the IAS and the Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs), discussed the complexities and expectations of the ILEARN assessment items, and reviewed impact data. The committees were composed of Indiana educators who are experts in their field of mathematics, ELA, and social studies and were recommended by their administrators and superintendent. The educators represented a wide variety of perspectives, including geographic variations (e.g., north, south, central Indiana), population density (e.g., urban, rural), race/ethnicity, soci-economic status, student populations, and school type (public, charter, accredited nonpublic).

IDOE requests State Board approval of performance standards for the ILEARN TYA represented in Table 2.

Table 2: Recommended Performance Standards for ILEARN Assessments

Content Area	Grade	Approaching Proficiency	At Proficiency	Above Proficiency
English/Language Arts	3	364	413	456
	4	388	434	484
	5	398	449	503
	6	408	462	518
	7	418	474	530
	8	431	484	540



Mathematics	3	468	485	512
	4	489	505	541
	5	505	531	573
	6	525	561	617
	7	549	605	669
	8	585	661	738
Social Studies	5	423	450	504

ILEARN Science assessments and performance standards were updated in 2024 and retain their current performance standards.

Impact of Recommended Cut Scores on Spring 2026 Assessments

The tables below illustrate the percent of students scoring within each of the established PLDs and corresponding cut scores. Due to the changes in academic standards and test design, this year's results should not be compared to ILEARN data in previous years, as these 2026 results present a new Indiana baseline.

Table 3: Percentage of Students Classified within Each Performance Level Spring 2026 for ILEARN Mathematics

	Below Proficiency	Approaching Proficiency	At Proficiency	Above Proficiency	At or Above Proficiency
Grade 3	19.8%	28.3%	42.1%	9.7%	51.9%
Grade 4	25.6%	22.4%	42.4%	9.6%	52.0%
Grade 5	31.7%	26.3%	32.2%	9.8%	42.0%
Grade 6	32.9%	26.9%	30.7%	9.5%	40.2%
Grade 7	32.6%	31.5%	26.2%	9.7%	35.9%
Grade 8	32.9%	32.9%	24.8%	9.4%	34.2%



***Table 4: Percentage of Students Classified within Each Performance Level Spring 2026
for ILEARN English/Language Arts***

	Below Proficiency	Approaching Proficiency	At Proficiency	Above Proficiency	At or Above Proficiency
Grade 3	15.1%	44.2%	32.8%	7.9%	40.7%
Grade 4	19.9%	37.8%	34.6%	7.7%	42.2%
Grade 5	20.3%	37.6%	34.4%	7.7%	42.2%
Grade 6	20.3%	38.4%	33.1%	8.2%	41.3%
Grade 7	20.3%	37.9%	32.8%	8.9%	41.7%
Grade 8	20.3%	35.7%	34.2%	9.8%	44.0%

***Table 5: Percentage of Students Classified within Each Performance Level Spring 2026
for ILEARN Social Studies***

	Below Proficiency	Approaching Proficiency	At Proficiency	Above Proficiency	At or Above Proficiency
Grade 5	31.7%	20.6%	31.5%	16.2%	47.7%