



Student Performance Levels

The Forward Exam is a summative assessment which provides information about what students know and can do in relation to the Wisconsin Academic Standards at each grade-level. Students receive a score based on their performance in each content area. The Student Performance Level (achievement level) is a categorical score. There are four performance levels:



Below Basic, Basic, Proficient, and Advanced. The goal for all students is to score at the proficient or advanced level. The performance levels help answer the question, “How does this student’s learning compare to the expectations for their grade level?”.



Performance levels are based on predetermined score ranges. The [score ranges](#) for each content area were set using a process in which Wisconsin educators were brought together at a [Standard Setting](#) to carefully consider the academic standards, performance level descriptors, and test questions. Performance level categories are defined as:

- **Advanced** – Student demonstrates thorough understanding of and ability to apply the knowledge and skills for their grade level that are associated with college content-readiness.
- **Proficient** – Student demonstrates adequate understanding of and ability to apply the knowledge and skills for their grade level that are associated with college content-readiness.
- **Basic** – Student demonstrates partial understanding of and ability to apply the knowledge and skills for their grade level that are associated with college content-readiness.
- **Below Basic** – Student demonstrates minimal understanding of and ability to apply the knowledge and skills for their grade level that are associated with college content-readiness.

Students who scored in the Proficient or Advanced performance level were meeting grade-level expectations at the time of testing. Students who scored in the Basic or Below Basic Performance level were performing below grade-level expectations at the



time of testing. The Forward Exam is one measure of student achievement and should be used in conjunction with multiple measures such as locally administered interim and formative assessment data, classroom observations, and student grades to gauge student learning.

More information about the Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs) is available on the [Forward Exam Data and Results webpage](#).