



## OVERVIEW

- All Delaware children deserve an education that will allow them to succeed in life. Delaware has been a leader in raising our academic standards; academic standards are learning goals for what students should know and be able to do at the end of each grade level. Through these higher standards, we are helping all of our students graduate better prepared for life.
- Delaware educators have been implementing the academic standards, developed in collaboration with teachers, administrators and experts, for the last few years. The state's assessments are designed to measure students' progress in mastering the standards. The tests let families, students and educators know whether students are on track for success and if students need extra supports.
- Students with disabilities who cannot meaningfully participate in general assessments, even with accommodations, can participate in an alternative assessment based on their individual student profile. Delaware offers the Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System - Alternate Assessment (DCAS-Alt1) and the Delaware Comprehensive Portfolio System (DCPS) as alternatives to the state's general assessments.

## MORE ABOUT THE ASSESSMENTS

- Just as with general assessments, Delaware's alternative assessments are important components of student learning, offering immediate feedback for educators and evaluations of student growth over the course of the year.
- Families and Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams work together to consider the needs of the student, the focus of his/her instruction and the requirements of each assessment method when considering which assessment to administer. Decisions should not be based on the student's disability, school program or performance on the general assessment. This approach ensures students are fully demonstrating their knowledge and skills and also assists educators in building and maintaining instruction aligned with academic expectations.
- Families of students taking the DCAS-Alt1 instead can request for their child to be considered for the DCPS, which is designed for students who, even with accommodations, cannot participate in a meaningful way in DCAS-Alt1.
- The purpose of DCPS is to measure the development of communication skills for students who have no reliable communication system that is understood by others. The assessment provides meaningful information to schools and families to help promote intentional communication. Once a student has a consistent and reliable communication system, it would be appropriate for the student to return to the DCAS-Alt1 assessment.