

# Comprehensive Exams FAQ

February 2026

**1. What are comprehensive exams?**

Comprehensive exams are new, subject-based assessments to replace the existing course-based ELA and math LEAP assessments in high school. The comprehensive exam for ELA will replace the LEAP English I and II exams. The comprehensive exam for math will replace LEAP Algebra I and LEAP Geometry exams. Passing both ELA and math comprehensive exams will be required for high school graduation for students entering the high school cohort in 2026-2027 and beyond.

**2. What is the purpose of the comprehensive exams?**

Comprehensive exams reduce the number of tests taken by high school students and ensure that all students test as required by law. This is aligned to the Department’s goals of reducing test time and increasing time available to support students so they can thrive.

**3. Will high school students be required to take any other high school assessments?**

At this time students will continue taking LEAP Biology and LEAP Civics in high school assessments concurrent with course enrollment, and applicable graduation requirements remain unchanged. Other assessment requirements remain unchanged including nationally recognized assessments.

The LEAP U.S. History assessment will continue to be administered as an operational assessment through the 2026-2027 school year. All operational assessments will continue to be included in the student’s final course grade and the School Performance Score (SPS). The only exception is for students who do not require Civics to meet graduation requirements, whose Civics assessment results will not be included in the SPS.

**4. When will students take comprehensive exams?**

Comprehensive exams are required for students entering the high school cohort in 2026-2027 and beyond. Students will take the exams two years after entry into the high school cohort. LEAP Biology and Civics exams will continue to be concurrent with course enrollment. At this time, there is not a plan for any standalone field testing.

Assessment Content	Year
ELA Comprehensive	Spring semester of the second year of the cohort
Math Comprehensive	Spring semester of the second year of the cohort
LEAP Biology	Concurrent with course enrollment
LEAP Civics	Concurrent with course enrollment

**5. Do all students have to take the exams in their second year of the cohort, or can they take the exams when they complete the Algebra I and Geometry or English I and English II sequences?**

A student's mathematical and English language arts skills should not decrease after they complete a specific subject course. Particularly for students who were placed on an advanced pathway, it is critical that they continue to receive mathematics and English language arts instruction. Standards that are addressed in the English I, English II, Algebra I, Geometry, Integrated Math I, and Integrated Math II courses can be supported in related subjects when students have progressed beyond the listed courses. Consistent with other high school national assessments, students are expected to retain mathematical and language skills beyond the year the content was taught.

**6. What is the timeline for implementation?**

The following table reflects which tests will be included in school accountability by school year.

School Year	English	Math	Science	Social Studies
<b>2026-2027</b> Final year of LEAP High School ELA and math subject tests	English I and II	Algebra I and Geometry	Biology	Civics / U.S. History
<b>2027-2028</b> 1st year of Comps	English Comprehensive Exam	Math Comprehensive Exam	Biology	Civics
<b>2028-2029</b>	English Comprehensive Exam	Math Comprehensive Exam	Biology	Civics
<b>2029-2030</b>	English Comprehensive Exam	Math Comprehensive Exam	Biology	Civics

The following table reflects graduation exam proficiency requirements by high school entry year.

High School Entry Year	English	Math	Science or Social Studies
<b>2024-2025</b>	English I & II Exams	Algebra I & Geometry Exams	Biology Exam / Civics Exam
<b>2025-2026</b>	English I & II Exams	Algebra I & Geometry Exams	Biology Exam / Civics Exam
<b>2026-2027</b>	1 English Exam	1 Math Exam	Biology Exam / Civics Exam
<b>2027-2028</b>	1 English Exam	1 Math Exam	Biology Exam / Civics Exam

- 7. What is the timeline for students taking 8th grade Algebra I in 2025-2026, since they are in the Fall 2026 high school cohort?**  
All students entering a regular high school grade for the first time in 2026-2027 will take both comprehensive exams in the spring semester of their second year of the cohort, even if they previously took Algebra I or English I.
- This approach would cause minimal disruption to accountability.
  - This approach ensures grading is fair so all students in a cohort are held to the same proficiency expectations.
- 8. If a 2026-2027 freshman takes a course with a LEAP exam (Algebra I, Geometry, English I, or English II) do they still have to take the LEAP exam, since they do not need it for graduation requirements?**  
Yes, the LEAP exam will still count as part of their final grade requirement for the 2026-2027 transitional year. These exams will also be included in the school performance score calculations.
- 9. Will LEAP 2025 HS exams continue to be included in final grade requirements for a course?**  
Beginning in 2027-2028, students who entered HS 2025-2026 and before will be required to take the LEAP 2025 exams if they are enrolled in English I, English II, Algebra 1, and Geometry courses. It is a local decision whether to include these exams as part of a final grade.
- Biology and Civics policy requires these scores to continue to be included in final grades for all cohorts.
- 10. Will comprehensive exams be included in final grade requirements for a course?**  
Comprehensive exams are not, by policy, required to be included in the final grade of a course. Beginning in 2027-2028, the inclusion of comprehensive assessments scores in a final course grade is a local education decision. Comprehensive exams are not concurrent with course enrollment.
- 11. Will comprehensive exams be a part of graduation requirements?**  
Yes, students with high school entry in 2026-2027 and beyond must pass both the English and math comprehensive exams to fulfill Louisiana graduation requirements.
- 12. Will there be an opportunity for students who do not meet assessment graduation requirements to retest?**  
Yes, students who did not score approaching basic or above on a comprehensive exam may retest in the next administration. There will be a fall and summer administration for retesting. Fall testing is for retesting purposes only, not initial testing.
- 13. For students with IEPs, how will April Dunn eligibility work for comprehensive exams?**  
A student with an IEP in high school must attempt the comprehensive exam for both English and math. If the student does not pass after two exam attempts (per subject), then the IEP team may determine if the student is required to meet state or local established performance standards on any assessment for purposes of graduation. Policy guidance to establish relevant IEP goals will be forthcoming.
- 14. How will comprehensive exams work for new English Language Learners?**  
English learners are expected to test with all students. For accountability purposes, a comprehensive exam score can be excluded from calculations for newly-arrived English learners

who have been in a United States school for less than two years. Students will continue to be able to receive accommodations as outlined in the English learner checklist.

**15. What are the achievement levels for the comprehensive exams?**

The achievement levels of the comprehensive exams will remain the same:

- Unsatisfactory
- Approaching Basic
- Basic
- Mastery
- Advanced

**16. How is growth calculated?**

Using the growth policy as outlined in Bulletin 111, student growth is calculated by comparing the scores from the eighth grade LEAP ELA and LEAP Math assessments to the high school comprehensive ELA and math exams taken in the spring semester of the second year of the cohort. The student must grow by one achievement subcategory from eighth grade to the comprehensive exam. If the student scored at mastery in eighth grade, the student must maintain mastery and improve one scale point per year since the prior test. If a student scored an advanced in eighth grade, the student must maintain an advanced.

**17. What are the assessment structures and item types of the comprehensive exams?**

The comprehensive exam will include items that address the Louisiana student standards as developed for English I and English II for the ELA exam and Algebra I, Geometry, Integrated I and Integrated II for the math exam. Question types will be similar to item types used on the current English I, English II, Algebra I, and Geometry LEAP high school assessments. The exams will be reviewed using the teacher committee processes currently used for LEAP item and form development as well as standard-setting.

**18. What are the Federal requirements for high school assessments?**

Per Federal requirements, students in high school must be assessed at least once in English, math, and science. All assessments must undergo federal peer review to assure that they are valid and reliable, that they cover the depth and breadth of the state's content standards and that there is a process for monitoring test security and standard administration procedures.

**19. How will high school teacher VAM scores be impacted by this change?**

Beginning in 2026-2027, VAM for high school teachers will not be available as there will no longer be annual, sequential test progression. With the comprehensive exam for high school students being taken in the tenth grade year, the tenth grade ELA and math score will have a two-year gap between the next available prior scores in eighth grade ELA and math. Without a sequential test progression, it is not possible to produce separate VAM results for two years of teachers instructing Algebra I, Geometry, English I, and English II.

**20. How will field testing work?**

The Department has a large bank of LEAP items already developed. Because the comprehensive exams are a combination of current LEAP high school subject-specific assessments (Algebra I & Geometry, and English I & English II), no standalone field testing will be required. Field tested items will be embedded in the upcoming LEAP high school assessments.

**21. When will LEAP become district administered assessments?**

Spring 2030 will be the final year of LEAP 2025 HS exams for English and math available as state-wide operational administrations. LEAP English I and II and LEAP Algebra I and Geometry will

become district administered assessments for all students who continue to need them for graduation purposes. Districts will be provided with test forms, answer keys and scoring directions and there will be no need to report the scores to the department.

**22. Following the implementation of comprehensive exams, will the 8th graders enrolled in Algebra I be required to take the regular 8th grade Math LEAP?**

Yes, beginning in 2027-2028, 8th graders enrolled in Algebra I will take the 8th grade math LEAP assessment.

**23. When will T9 students take the comprehensive exams? Will there be any other considerations for T9 students?**

The T9 year will not be considered the first year of regular high school. Per policy, a student who is T9 in 2025-2026 will be counted as entering high school in 2026-2027. The students will be required to take the comprehensive exam in their second regular high school year (not including T9 year.)

**24. Are there assessment guides available for the comprehensive exam?**

The first administration of these assessments will not occur until Spring 2028, schools should continue teaching high school math and English language arts standards, as tests are designed to assess these standards. Assessment guides are under development.

**25. If a student transfers into a Louisiana high school, do they have to participate in comprehensive exams?**

Yes, a transfer student must take the comprehensive exams. The exception to this rule is if the student transfers in twelfth grade with fewer than 30 days of enrollment in a Louisiana public high school, then they are not required to take the comprehensive ELA and math exams.