



## Resource 9

# Questions and Answers About Student Expectations in New Mexico

New Mexico holds high expectations for its students. Listed below is information that you need to know and understand regarding student expectations in New Mexico.

### What are the New Mexico Content Standards, Benchmarks and Performance Standards?

**The Content Standards** are broad descriptions of knowledge and skills students should learn in a particular aspect or strand of a subject area. They are few in number, general in scope, and often categorized by strand.

#### A Sample Mathematics Standard:

Students will understand geometric concepts and applications.

**The Benchmarks** are a more specific statements of what all students should know and be able to do in a content area across grade levels. Currently, the New Mexico Benchmarks are grouped K-4, 5-8 and 9-12. They are greater in number and more specific in scope.

#### Sample Mathematics Benchmark

Strand: Geometry (In grades K-4: Use visualization, spatial reasoning and geometric modeling to solve problems.)

**The Performance Standards** are more specific about what students should know and be able to do in order to demonstrate proficiency in the skills and knowledge framed by the content standards. They are many in number, specific in scope and often grade level specific. Concepts and skills introduced and learned at a grade level continue to be strengthened and developed in later grades.

#### Sample Mathematics Performance Standards for Grade 2:

1. Demonstrate relationships of different attributes with concrete materials.
2. Select and use visualization skills to create mental images of geometric shapes.
3. Describe geometric shapes and structures from different perspectives.
4. Relate geometric ideas to numbers.
5. Recognize geometric shapes and structures in the environment and specify their location.

### How are the state content standards developed?

Many people are involved in creating the standards. Teams of K-12 teachers, parents, business and community leaders and representatives of the higher education community all have taken part in the development of the standards.

### How is student progress toward meeting the standards measured?

No single type of assessment is enough to meet all the needs for information or to demonstrate how your child is meeting the New Mexico Content Standards. The combined use of a variety of ongoing **classroom, school, district and state assessments** provide a comprehensive assessment system of student achievement. Talk with your child's teacher or school principal about assessments being used in your school/district and how they are using test results to improve teaching and learning.

The statewide tests are Criterion Referenced Tests (CRTs) which are directly tied to the New Mexico Content Standards and designed to determine whether a student's performance meets specific levels. These tests will produce reports on each child that will be given to parents. For more information, talk to your child's teacher and visit the State's Assessment and Evaluation web site at <http://www.ped.state.nm.us/div/ais/assess/index.html>.

### What questions should I ask?

- How do I get a copy of the standards?
- What is my child expected to learn?
- What can I do if my child needs more challenge or support?
- How often will my child be tested?
- How will testing results be reported to parents?

### Throughout the school year, ask about student expectations.

- What do you expect my child to learn this year in reading and math?
- What are the most important things for the children in your classroom to learn this year?
- What can I do at home to help my child learn these skills?
- How can I help with homework?
- How often is the reporting of progress made to parents?

A complete set of the New Mexico Content Standards are available in a reference guide booklet and on line.  
[www.cesdp.nmhu.edu](http://www.cesdp.nmhu.edu)

They are also available on the Public Education Department web site.  
[www.nmlites.org/standards/index.html](http://www.nmlites.org/standards/index.html)