

OCTOBER 26, 2023

# ARKANSAS POLICY PERFORMANCE LEVEL DESCRIPTORS

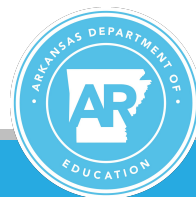


# Agenda

1. Review the Definitions and Purposes of Performance Level Descriptors
2. Meeting Goals
3. Recap of Previous LEARNs Meeting
4. Draft Arkansas Policy PLDs

# Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs)

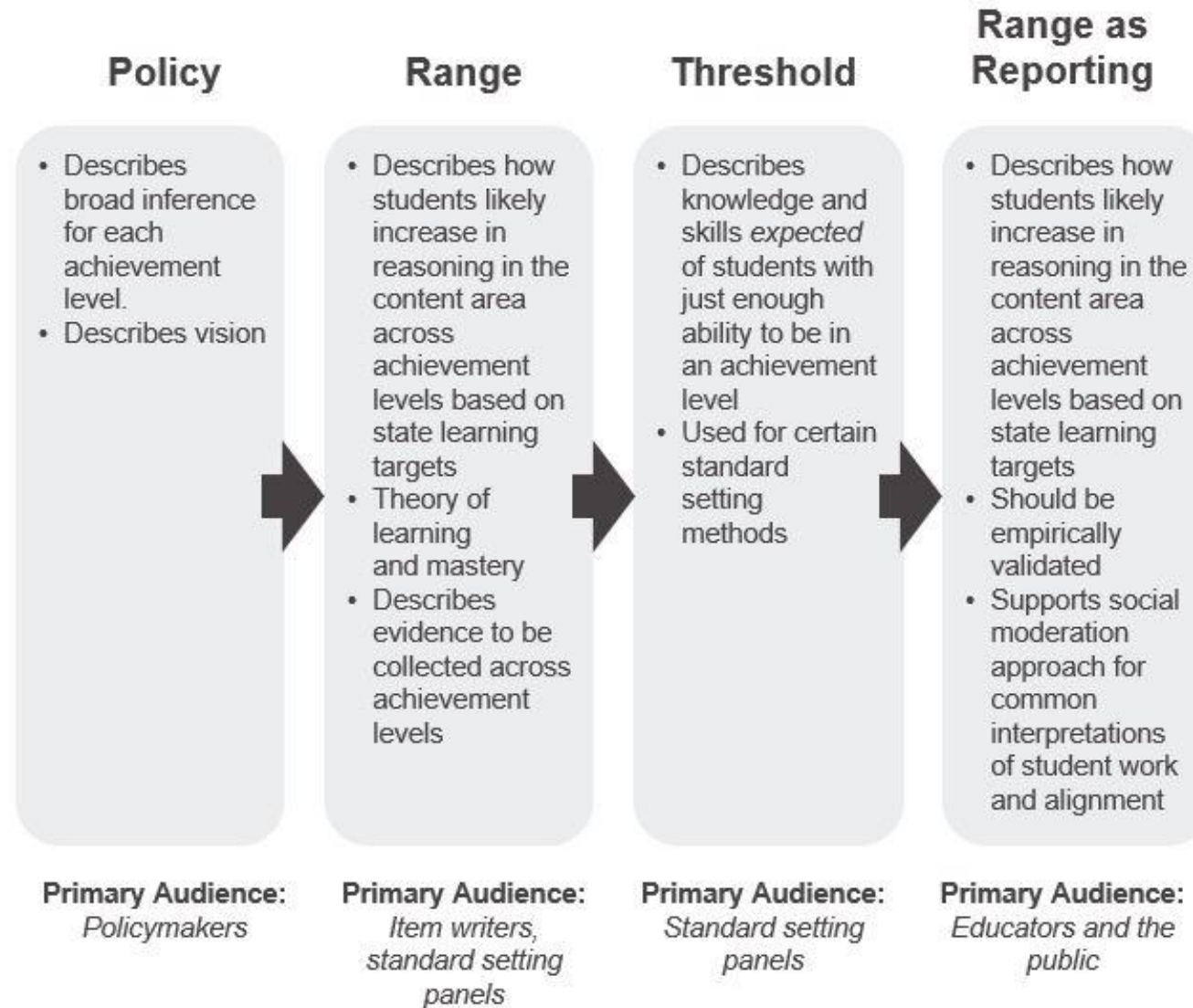
Performance Level Descriptors outline the knowledge, skills, and practices that students performing at any given level achieve in each content area at each grade level.



# PLD Framework

- **Policy PLDs** – articulate the overall claims about a student’s performance in each performance level. The policy PLDs are used by policymakers to broadly articulate the goals and rigor for the state’s performance standards.
- **Range PLDs** – written to each standard or performance expectation, which are observable evidence of achievement and demonstrate how the skill changes and becomes more sophisticated across achievement levels.
- **Threshold PLDs** – created and used during Standard Setting to separate the highest performing in one performance level to the lowest performing from the adjacent performance level.
- **Reporting PLDs** – created after final cut scores are adopted and used in reporting.

# Intended Types and Uses of PLDs



<b>PLD Type</b>	<b>Use</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Intended Audience</b>
Policy	Test development and conceptualization	Set tone for the rigor of performance standards expected by DESE	Policymakers
Range	Item-writing guidance	Define content range and limits Item	writers and test developers
Threshold	Cut-score recommendation and standard-setting guidance	Define threshold performance at each achievement level	Standard-setting panelists
Reporting	Test-score interpretation	Describe the knowledge, skills, and processes that test takers demonstrate and indicate the knowledge and skills that must be developed to attain the next level of achievement	Stakeholders, such as parents, students, teachers, K-12 leaders, and higher education officials



# October Meeting Goals

- Develop Arkansas Policy PLDs (draft)
- Discuss plans for December 6<sup>th</sup> meeting
  - In person
  - 9:00-3:30
  - Location TBD
  - DESE content leaders, LEARNS Working Group, Cambium
  - Review/Edit Draft Range Performance Level Descriptors

# Recap of Previous Meeting

- Presentation of how weighted achievement is calculated
- Defined PLDs
- Reviewed other state's PLDs
- Provided feedback for Arkansas PLDs



# Explore



## Note Catcher

Breakout room 1:

North Carolina

Florida

Breakout room 2:

Louisiana

Oklahoma

Breakout room 3:

Oregon

Connecticut

Breakout room 4:

Texas

Alabama

# Taking a Closer Look



When reviewing other PLDs, consider the following questions:

- What language resonates with you?
- What language provides a clear explanation of student achievement?
- What language should be avoided?
- In terms of organization, what seemed accessible to all stakeholders?
- What are the implications to students?

# Take Aways from Example Policy PLDs Reviewed

## Report out Notes

1. NC stood out as being unclear. Were there four levels or five?? Very confusing. Levels 4-5 lumped too many students together. The **labels were positive**—but no precision and almost synonyms of each other. Positive, but almost too positive because couldn't distinguish among labels. Did like their organization—easy to locate and read although language unclear.
2. FL—Way too much reading. Don't like some of the labels especially inadequate and below satisfactory. Top level labels were much better. **Descriptors were good**. They are clear to parents to know what students need to know to reach next level.
3. **Liked stating what students can do**. And want parents to easily access and understand document.

# Take Aways from Example Policy PLDs Reviewed

## Report out Notes (Continued)

1. OK–Had four levels. They used the label below basic which is too negative and didn't have a descriptor of what this means. **Liked when it stated what students can do** in the document–this is good for parents. Students are ready for... (liked this language).
2. LA- Five levels. There level two and three were divided between “nearly” and “partially” Group couldn't tell the difference between the two groups–not clear. **There bottom level was unsatisfactory– also negative.**
  - a. **What are words that are we could use that are more positive for “bottom” labels?:** Developing, approaching, near goal
3. OR– Four levels; Nearly meets might be a little confusing for EL students. **Descriptors are clear** but short
4. CT– Four levels– “Doesn't meet” is the label of lowest level. Document organized, but too wordy. **Labels better** than Oregon overall.

# Take Aways from Example Policy PLDs Reviewed

## Report out Notes (Continued)

1. TX– Four levels–Did not meet is the label of lowest level. **Not about Mastery of grade level but more about have students ready for next grade level.** Could be confusing to parents that the language is focused on next grade and not how their child performed on current grade level.
2. What did student understand on current level that don't need to revisit next year.
3. AL– four levels. Didn't like the 1, 2,3,4 labels. Descriptions on each one but have to dig into each one for a parent. Very overwhelming.
4. Group thought 3 levels might be good. Parents can understand students performing under grade level, at grade level, or above grade level. If use 4 levels, we will need to really define what a 2 means.

# Purpose of state assessments

## K-2

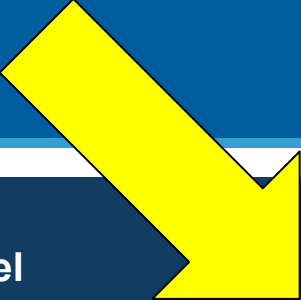
- Checking development and progress throughout the year on foundational skills
- Screener that may signal further diagnostic testing

## 3-8

- Student growth and achievement at the aggregate level towards **grade-level** expectations
- Classroom/School/District system check

## 9-12

- Student growth and achievement at the aggregate level towards **course** expectations
- Classroom/School/District system check
- Early indication for college and career readiness



Achievement Level	Description	Meets Grade Level Standards	Meets College and Career Readiness Standard
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1

no

no

2

yes

no

3

yes

yes

4

yes

yes

# Guiding Questions

- What claims should the policy PLDs make about students at each performance level?
- What general descriptors best articulate the intended rigor for ATLAS?
- How should we represent what proficiency means?



# Arkansas Policy PLD Draft – (October meeting draft)

<b>Achievement Level</b>	<b>Label</b>	<b>Description</b>
1	Emerging	Students have demonstrated a limited understanding of grade level standards.
2	Approaching	Students have demonstrated a growing understanding of grade level standards.
3	Meeting	Students have demonstrated proficiency of grade level standards.
4	Exceeding	Students have demonstrated advanced understanding of grade level standards.