Below are questions your district should be prepared to answer about the 2021 assessment results. This FAQ can be customized with your district specific information and turned into a handout, posted on your district’s website, or used as a reference guide when speaking with stakeholders.

**Why did students take assessments this school year during a pandemic?**

[STATE] was federally required [OPTIONAL IF APPLICABLE: STATE WAS REQUIRED BY FEDERAL AND STATE LAW] to administer a statewide assessment. [NAME OF TEST] can provide critical information about individual student performance and about where we need to better support students, educators and schools across our district.

Our goal is to use the results to help COVID-19 school recovery efforts so we can create a stronger and more equitable education system.

**[OPTIONAL IF APPLICABLE] Why did assessment scores decrease across the district/in my school? Does this mean that students learned less this year?**

The COVID-19 pandemic has reshaped most aspects of education in the 2020-2021 school year, including assessments. As a result, the process for student test taking and the results from this year’s assessments may look different than in previous school years.

Factors such as learning disruptions, test modifications, chronic absenteeism, and student participation rates may have impacted school and district results.

**[OPTIONAL IF APPLICABLE] Why did assessment scores increase across the district/in my school? Does this mean that students learned more than we expected?**

The gains reflected in the district and school-level results could be due to a number of reasons, including uneven student participation or a decrease in participation rates, and do not present a whole picture of academic performance.

**Why did fewer students participate in the state assessment?**

Assessment participation rates vary across districts and schools and may have changed due to health and safety concerns associated with in-person testing, challenges with technology for remote testing [IF APPLICABLE], or other factors.

[OPTIONAL IF APPLICABLE] Even though the district’s participation rates are lower than in past years, the assessment results, when combined with other data, present an opportunity to inform the type of supports students and schools need to be successful. We owe it to students to use every piece of information we have to help them succeed.

**What does a low score mean? Will a low score impact my child?**

In any year, a single test score does not provide a complete or precise measure of student achievement. We encourage parents to consider their child’s results within the context of the variety of potential learning disruptions they may have encountered as well as the modifications that were made to the assessment itself.

[SCHOOL DISTRICT NAME] is utilizing the information gained from the assessment as an important temperature check that allows us to better track and address student recovery in the short and long term. The results will be used to help direct COVID-related recovery efforts supported by state and federal relief funds. We owe it to students to use every piece of information we have to help them succeed.

**How will states, district leaders, and educators use the assessment results?**

Assessment results are just one of a number of strategies that we’re conducting to evaluate COVID-19 school recovery and create a stronger and more equitable education system.

Results are being used to inform our ongoing work to support schools and improve educational outcomes for students. For example, schools and educators will be able to identify areas where they need to accelerate student learning. State leaders also gain valuable information and can better direct attention and resources to the districts, schools, and focus areas that most need it.

[OPTIONAL IF APPLICABLE]: Assessment results won’t be used to judge educators.

**How should parents use the assessment results to support their children?**

Parents will receive an individual student report that will detail a student’s performance along with summary information about aggregate performance [IF TRUE] at the school, district, and state levels. The results can provide a helpful temperature check for where their child is excelling as well as where they may need more support. We encourage parents to consider their child’s results within the context of the variety of potential learning disruptions they may have encountered as well as the modifications that were made to the assessment itself.

**Given this year’s assessment results, what changes will you make for next school year?**

We now have new information about areas where students and schools need support. We also know from the participation data who did and did not take the assessment due to COVID-19 learning conditions. We will consider all of this in context of the decisions we make moving forward to support students. [NOTE: Add a concrete example of how results will inform decisions if possible.]

**Where can I view the assessment results?**

To view more information about the assessment results, visit [INSERT WEB LINK].