

## District Website Recommendations

Information on annual assessments should be widely available to parents via online channels. The recommendations below are designed to help districts provide clear, easy-to-find resources on annual assessments.

- *Prominently Link to Assessment Information from the Website Homepage*
  - Finding information on annual assessments shouldn't be a scavenger hunt. By clearly displaying links to the standards and assessment on the homepage, parents are more likely to view the webpages and the content provided. This also increases the feeling of transparency because information and data is accessible.

**District example:** [Denver Public Schools](#) includes a link on their homepage to learn more about Colorado's academic standards.

- *Keep Content Reader Friendly*

Parents shouldn't have to read lengthy documents to understand the annual assessment.

  - **Bold headings**, key words or phrases to make them stand out to readers.
  - **Use bullet points** to distinguish text and increase readability – particularly when content is viewed on smartphones.
  - **Avoid jargon** when possible and explain concepts. For example, not all audiences will understand the difference between standards and curriculum, or formative and summative assessments.
  - **Focus on topline ideas.** Readers won't remember everything, so emphasize the most important details.

**District example:** [The Issaquah School District's](#) explanation of the Smarter Balanced Test<sup>®</sup> uses bullet points, bolded text, FAQs, and links to additional content to keep their webpage user-friendly.

- *Explain the Value in Assessments*

Assessment pages should both explain the test and why it's important. Top messages to convey include:

  - Provide teachers and parents with information about student progress that can be used to improve instruction and support in the classroom.
  - Identify specific strengths and areas of growth for students.
  - Identify achievement gaps to help ensure all students receive the support and resources they need to succeed.
  - Serve as an academic check-up to make sure students are on track for the next grade.

The assessment one-pager, included in your toolkit, can also be used as webpage content, to explain your annual assessment.

**District example:** [Manchester Public Schools](#) shared Connecticut’s parent guide on their website, which explains how the new assessment helps students develop real-world skills, data points showing how the standards have improved student outcomes in Kentucky, and helpful resources for

- *Include Additional Resources*

In addition to providing an overview of the annual assessment, your district website can also serve as a hub for all parent resources on assessments. This might include:

- FAQs
- Parent Letters
- Videos
- Presentations
- One-Pager
- Calendar of assessments

Several of these resources are included in this toolkit, and can be tailored for your district’s website. Your district can also link to your state education agency’s resources, as well as resources provided by your testing consortia.

**District example:** [Boston Public Schools](#) includes videos, FAQs, presentations and parent handouts on their website to provide additional information on the Common Core State Standards and PARCC assessment.

- *Remember Translations*

All parents deserve information on annual assessments, not just English-speaking parents. Districts should make all parent handouts available for ESL parents.

**District example:** [Portland Public Schools](#) includes translations of parent documents into several different languages.