

Pan-Canadian Assessment Program (PCAP) 2013 Summary of Results for British Columbia

What is PCAP?

The Pan-Canadian Assessment Program (PCAP) is a national assessment of Grade 8 student achievement in reading, mathematics and science. It is organized in partnership with the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) and all Canadian jurisdictions.

PCAP takes place every three years. In the most recent administration, in 2013, science was the major domain (focus) and reading and mathematics were minor domains. This was the third administration of PCAP (2007, 2010 and 2013).

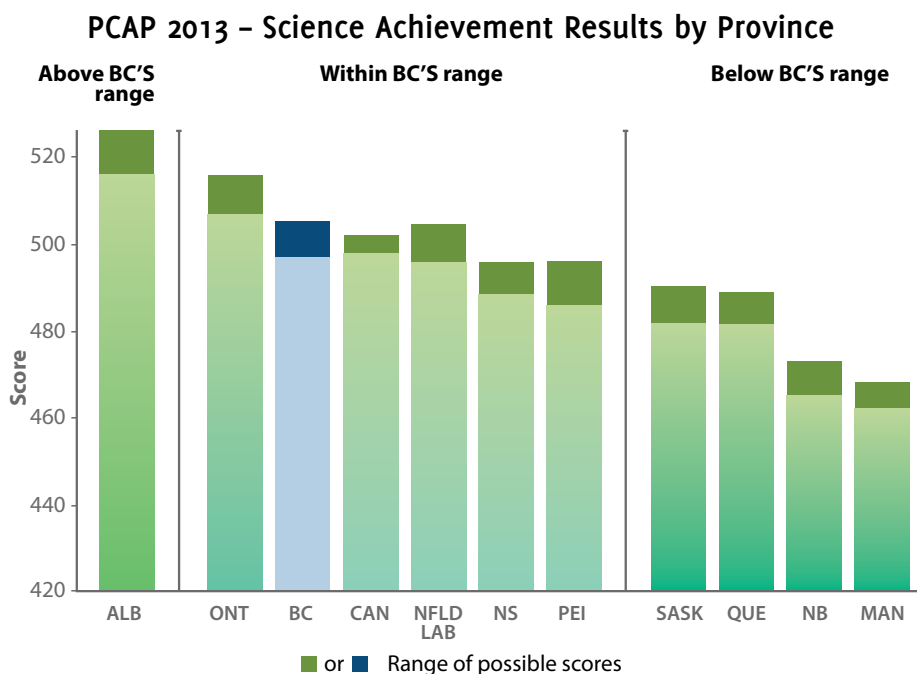
PCAP is conducted on a random sample basis. Across Canada, approximately 32,600 students participated in 2013. In BC, about 3500 students from 162 schools participated.

Students, teachers and principals also complete questionnaires, which help to contextualize achievement results and provide information on factors associated with successful students, schools and education systems¹.

PCAP achievement results are presented in terms of “ranges”. Since only a random sample of BC students writes the assessment, the results of those students are used to estimate how well BC students would have performed if all students had participated. This involves a certain degree of uncertainty, so a range of possible scores is included above and below the mean score of the participating students (95% confidence interval). If the range of one province overlaps with the range of another province, they are performing in the same range (no statistically significant difference). If there is no overlap between the ranges, it means that one of the provinces outperformed the other one (statistically significant difference).

How Did BC Students Do in Science (Major Domain)?

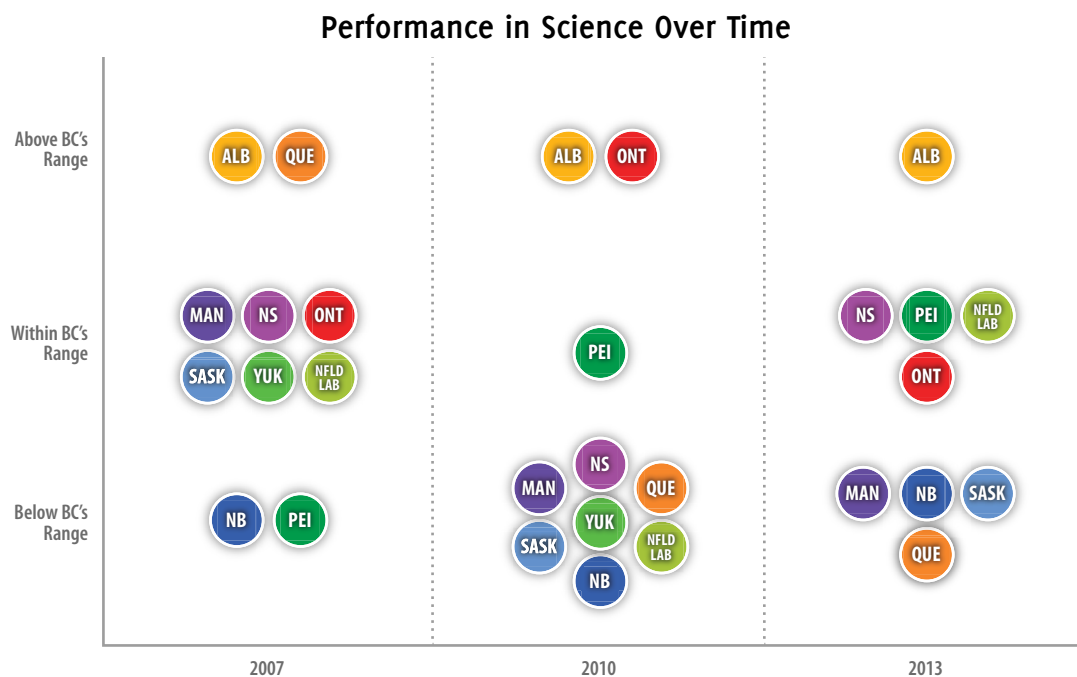
Consistent with results from previous national and international assessments, BC students performed well on PCAP 2013. In science, which was the major domain, only one province performed above BC’s range (Alberta), four were within BC’s range (Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Ontario and Prince Edward Island) and four were below BC’s range (Manitoba, New Brunswick, Quebec and Saskatchewan). BC’s performance was in the same range as the Canadian average.



¹ Questionnaire results are released separately from achievement results.

How Did BC Students Do in Science? (Continued)

- In science, 91% of BC students and 92% of Canadian students reached or exceeded the level of achievement expected of Grade 8 students.
- Male and female students performed equally well in science both within BC and in Canada overall.
- BC's Francophone students performed very well in PCAP 2013. While in Canada as a whole, Anglophone students outperformed Francophone students in science, in BC there was no statistical difference between the performance of Anglophone and Francophone students.
- BC's performance in science has remained relatively stable over the three administrations of PCAP.



How Did BC Students Do in Reading and Mathematics (Minor Domains)?

- In reading, BC performed below the Canadian average. Only one province performed above BC's range (Ontario), four were within BC's range (Alberta, Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island and Quebec) and four were below BC's range (Manitoba, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Saskatchewan).
- BC's reading score in 2013 was not statistically different from our scores on the 2010 or 2007 administrations.
- In mathematics, BC performed below the Canadian average. Three provinces performed above BC's range (Alberta, Ontario and Quebec), four were within BC's range (Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Saskatchewan) and two were below BC's range (Manitoba and New Brunswick).
- BC's average score in mathematics has increased since the 2010 administration. This was the general trend for most provinces and for Canada as a whole. However, this is in contrast to recent mathematics results on the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), which assesses 15-year-old students.

Where Can I Get More Information?

BC Ministry of Education webpage: www.bced.gov.bc.ca/assessment/nat_int_pubs.htm

Email questions to: NatIntQuestions@gov.bc.ca