

**The purpose of the following information is to give you a better understanding of the TerraNova and of your child's test scores.**

**What kind of test is the TerraNova?**

TerraNova is a "standardized" test, meaning that it is always given and scored the same way. This "standardization" allows for an individual student's performance to be compared with other students nationally taking the same test, or with a set of academic standards or objectives.

This standardized test contains multiple-choice questions. This type of test question presents students with several answer choices, of which only one is correct.

**How should the test results be used?** It is important to remember that your child's results from TerraNova are just one of the many different sources available to determine how well your child is progressing in their educational program. In the same way that a physician uses different types of checklists and tests to evaluate your health, testing is just one way to determine how well your child is learning.

**Will the results of this test determine whether the student will pass or fail this school year?**

TerraNova is not designed to determine whether a student will pass or fail a year in school. The results of an achievement test, noting areas of strength and areas of need, can be used to plan a program of instruction. Standardized test results are supplemented with projects, classroom related tests, evaluation of class work and homework assignments, and similar methods of appraisal to adequately assess what the student has learned.

**Understanding your student's percentile rank.**

Student percentile can be seen in the conversion of the student Scale Score to the National Percentile. The National Percentile average is 50%, half the students tested nation wide had scores above 50% and half below 50%. If your child scored at the 65<sup>th</sup> percentile in Reading, that would mean that he or she scored equal to or above 65 percent of the students tested.

**Percentile/Percentage:** TerraNova test results does not address student's percentage. The student percentile, converting Scale Score to National Percentile is described above.

**Scale Score (SS)-** Sometimes called a "Growth Scale," the SS describes growth in achievement that typically occurs as a student progresses through a

grade. The raw score determines the SS and the SS scores are used as a basis to derive other norm-referenced scores.

**Grade Equivalent (GE)-**Represents the school year and month of students in the norm group whose test performance is theoretically equivalent to the test performance of a given student. (8.2 would mean the student was in his 8<sup>th</sup> year, 2<sup>nd</sup> month of school.) Caution should be exercised in interpreting grade equivalents. A second-grade student who obtains a reading grade-equivalent score above 4.0 should not be advanced to a fourth-grade reading class as a result of the test score alone. This GE score of 4.0 is a good indication that the student reads considerably better than the average second grade student. However, if the student had taken a test designed for the fourth grade student, it is possible that he or she would not have scored 4.0.

**Composite** is another word for average.

**PHS** is abbreviation for Post High School.

**Raw Score**-Number of correct answers.

**Stanine** draws its name from the fact that it is a standard score related to a scale of nine units. The scale of equal units from 1 through 9 has the mean of 5 and a standard deviation of 2. Although stanines are not as precise as percentile ranks, because they are single digits they are less likely to be confused with percentages of test items answered correctly.

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**Comparison of Stanines and Percentiles:**

<u>Stanines</u>	<u>Approximate Percentiles</u>	<u>Percentage of Students</u>
9 Highest level	96-99	4%
8 High level	90-95	7%
7 Well above average	78-89	12%
6 Slightly above average	60-77	17%
5 Average	41-59	20%
4 Slightly below average	23-40	17%
3 Well below average	11- 22	12%
2 Low level	5-10	7%
1 Lowest level	1-4	4%

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If you have questions about the TerraNova or about its scoring, please feel free to contact me.

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