



UTAH CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Nurturing Faith, Expanding Knowledge, Preparing for the Future

Utah Catholic Schools • 27 C Street, Salt Lake City, Utah 84103 • (801) 328-8641 • dioslc.org/schools

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Dear Parents/Guardians of Utah Catholic Schools,

Welcome to the 2022-2023 School Year! I am looking forward to working with schools, especially in the areas of assessment, curricula, and data. Beginning this year, all students, grades 2-8, will be participating in the Renaissance Star Assessments, a national standardized assessment tool. The results from the Star assessments provide teachers with current, reliable, and valid data that can be used to target instruction, monitor progress, provide students with appropriate instructional materials, and intervene with at-risk students.

Your child(ren)'s baseline will be established during the first testing window (August 29-September 2), and throughout the school year, you will receive information about his/her performance. Keep in mind that standardized assessments are only one measure of student growth.

Thank you for choosing Catholic education to cultivate your child(ren)'s spiritual, intellectual, and personal growth. Please see below for Renaissance Star Assessments frequently asked questions/answers and information specific to Utah Catholic Schools.

Nikki Ward
Associate Superintendent

What is Renaissance Star testing?

The Renaissance Star is a suite of tests which consist of Renaissance Star Early Literacy®, Renaissance Star Reading® and Renaissance Star Math®. The Renaissance Star tests are used to understand and view students' progress, achievement, and growth throughout the school year. The tests cover the following:

- **Star Early Literacy (Grades K-1):** Word Skills (alphabetic principle, concept of word, visual discrimination, phonemic awareness, phonics, structural analysis & vocabulary), Comprehension Strategies (sentences & paragraphs) and Numbers and Operations (early numeracy)
- **Star Math (Grades 1-8):** Numbers & Operations, Algebra, Geometry and Measurement and Data Analysis, Statistics and Probability
- **Star Reading Grades 1-8):** Word Knowledge and Skills, Comprehension Strategies and Constructing Meaning, Analyzing Literary Text, Understanding Author's Craft and Analyzing Argument and Evaluating Text

How are Renaissance Star tests administered?

Renaissance Star testing is administered using computer-adaptive tests that are given online and intuitive. As an adaptive test, the questions that appear on the tests are dependent on how a child scores on the preceding questions. This means the question difficulty adjusts based on what the student can answer correctly, or what is answered incorrectly. If a student answers a question correctly, the test adapts to give a more difficult question next; if a student answers incorrectly, the next question's difficulty is decreased. Computer-adaptive tests save testing time and spare students the frustration of items that are too difficult and the boredom of items that are too easy. Each test takes about 20 minutes to complete, although some students may require more time. All questions are multiple choice, with 3-4 answer choices per question.

How is Renaissance Star testing used?

The results from Renaissance Star testing help teachers evaluate students' strengths and areas of growth, and assist teachers in developing instruction. The assessments may also identify areas that need to be improved upon, revisited, or enriched for students, as well as monitoring growth and performance in relation to curriculum standards. Star assessments can also be used to determine a student's reading and math achievement level. The Early Literacy assessment helps educators monitor students' growth and progress towards becoming independent readers.

How are Renaissance Star Reading and Math scores found?

The Renaissance Star Math and Reading scores are Scaled Scores (SS). The score is based on two factors: 1) the difficulty of the questions and 2) the number of correct answers the child gave. Because the test is an adaptive test, some students will receive less difficult questions, depending on how they answer preceding questions on the test. The SS for the assessments range from 0-1400, while the SS for Early Literacy ranges from 300-900. The SS aligns with math and reading skills for each grade level. For example:

- A reading SS of 0-500 corresponds to Grades 1-5
- A reading SS of 500-900 corresponds to Grades 6-8




Scaled scores are useful for comparing your child's performance over time and across grade levels. The reports will also contain your child's Percentile Rank (PR) and Percentile Rank Range (PR Range). The PR score compares your child's performance with that of other students nationally in the same grade. For example, if your child's PR is 69, he/she scored better than 69% of the students nationally. The PR Range represents the range that your child would be expected to score if he/she took the test again within the next 4-6 weeks.

Please see the [Parent's Guide to Star Assessments](#) for additional information.

Utah Catholic Schools Screening Windows:

Beginning of the Year	August 29 – September 2
Beginning of 2 nd Quarter	October 17-21
Middle of the Year	January 17-20
Beginning of 4 th Quarter	March 13-17
End of the Year	May 15-19

Utah Catholic Schools Benchmarks:

At/Above Benchmark	At/Above 70 PR	
On Watch	50-69 PR	
Intervention	35-59 PR	
Urgent Intervention	Below 35 PR	