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These performance standards serve at the basis of design specifications for the New Standards reference examinations and portfolios, which in turn provide information about performance to students, teachers, and parents.

But the performance standards cannot by themselves provide all of the information students and teachers will need in order to improve student performance in the core subjects.

Therefore, we include here some of the common requests we encounter from people who have begun to use the performance standards, along with information about the New Standards resources available to answer those requests.

- Where can I find samples of student work that do not yet meet the standards? What about rubrics and scoring guides?

New Standards Released Tasks contain sample tasks, scoring rubrics, and samples of student work at all of the score points given in the rubrics. Released Tasks can be ordered from Harcourt Brace Educational Measurement (Tel. 800-228-0752).

- Clearly, many parts of the performance standards can only be assessed through some kind of portfolio system. Does New Standards offer portfolios?

Yes—the New Standards portfolios in Mathematics, Science, English Language Arts, and Applied Learning are constructed to link directly to the performance standards. Portfolios are available individually, in classroom sets, and in sampler packets. Portfolios can be ordered directly from New Standards (Tel. 888-361-6233).

- Our school district is using the performance standards to improve teaching and learning. We want standardized tests that can tell us how our students are doing based on the standards. What does New Standards offer?

The New Standards reference examinations are available in English Language Arts and Mathematics for grades 4, 8, and 10. The examinations are designed using the performance standards as their foundation. Score reports for the reference examinations tell teachers and students about the quality of student work by referring to the performance standards. To order reference examinations, call Harcourt Brace Educational Measurement (Tel. 800-228-0752).

- In order to move to a standards-based district, we need professional development and consulting for teachers and central office staff. Can New Standards help us with this?

New Standards consultants can provide on-site services in several areas, including professional development, public engagement, strategic planning, standards linking, and technical issues involved with performance assessment. To discuss services needed by your school or district, call the Office of State and Local Relations, located at the National Center on Education and the Economy (Tel. 202-783-3668).