

ISEE Frequently Asked Questions *for Parents & Students*

In an effort to continually support the ERB ISEE schools and families, we have put together the following document to help answer questions regarding the ISEE score report and a few additional frequently asked questions from parents. While much of this information can be found in various materials already provided, the purpose of this document is to consolidate the most frequently asked questions.

Are tutors using the current ISEE information?

Tutors, schools, and individuals do not have access to the “real” ISEE as it is a secure test and the questions have not been released. ERB does not endorse the use of tutors for any of our services, which is why we have created our own materials to help prepare students for the ISEE. These materials, available FREE online at <http://isee.erblearn.org>, are the only up-to-date, consistent and accurate materials that are sanctioned by ERB for the ISEE.

Is the ISEE today more difficult than the ISEE of previous years?

There is no indication that this year’s test is more difficult or producing lower scores than previous years. To further confirm, ERB has conducted an analysis of students’ overall relative performance on this year’s ISEE and found it comparable to students’ overall relative performance in previous years.

What role does the ISEE have in the admission process?

The ISEE offers a standard assessment of skills that is taken by each applicant, only once, that ranks his/her abilities and achievement to others applying to the same grade. It is valuable when comparing similar applicants from different schools. The standards on the ISEE are national and international standards aligned with the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), the International Reading Association (IRA), and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM). Schools utilize the ISEE scores as one piece of the overall student profile for applicant consideration.

Can I view more detailed information about the ISEE?

Yes, an overview of the test, sample questions categorized by item type, and a score report with a thorough explanation of each part of the report can be found free of charge online at www.iseetest.org under “ISEE Preparation Materials.”

What is a raw score?

A raw score is the number of questions a student answered correctly. There is no penalty for incorrect answers on the ISEE.

What is a scaled score?

The scaled score is a common scale, derived from the raw score, that has the same meaning for all students regardless of the edition or form taken. The scaled score is used to control for slight variations among different forms of a test and enables us to report a score on a common scale that has the same meaning for all students. The scaled score range for all sections, all levels of the ISEE falls between 760-940.

What is the composition of ISEE norm group?

The norm group consists of all students in the same grade who took the ISEE test over the past three years. Students are not ranked regionally, nor are they compared to other testers on the same day of testing. All students in the 2009-10 season are compared to the same “norm” group of ISEE testers by grade over the past 3 years.

What is a percentile?

The percentile is a ranking of where the student stands relative to the ISEE norm group (it is not the percentage of questions the student answered correctly). For example, a percentile rank of 63 on an ISEE test section indicates that the student scored as well as or higher than 63 percent (and lower than 36 percent) of all students in the norm group. Percentile rank scores range from 1 to 99.

Is your percentile ranking a competitive group of students?

Yes, the ISEE percentile rank is a competitive group of students in that all students taking the ISEE are generally high-achieving students. Because the reference group is the group of students at this grade level who took the ISEE over the last 3 years and not a national norm they may have been compared to on other standardized tests, students may find their percentile score is lower than they have experienced with other tests. A student who always scored above the 50th percentile may find himself or herself below the 50th percentile, and students who normally score above the 90th percentile on other tests may find themselves barely above average on the ISEE. For example, parents are frequently surprised when they see a 75th percentile score for a child who scored at the 95th percentile last year on a test based on state or national norms. It is due to the high-achieving population of students taking the ISEE that makes the ranking so competitive.

What is a stanine?

A stanine is an abbreviated version of the percentile. While there are 99 percentile ranks, which are ideal for fine distinctions among students, the stanine has only 9 possible values and divides students into nine groups:

Percentile Rank	1-3	4-10	11-22	23-39	40-59	60-76	77-88	89-95	96-99
Stanine	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

What does the analysis section of the report provide?

The analysis section of the report provides additional information to show the child's mastery in the skill individually as well as the number of correct answers for each section.

If I have additional questions or would like to discuss a student's score report, whom may I contact?

At any point you may request information or review of a score report. Please email Elizabeth Mangas, Executive Director, ISEE, emangas@erblearn.org and she or someone from the ISEE team will be happy to answer any questions you have.