

## Frequently Asked Questions TNReady Calculator Policy

### 1. What is the TNReady calculator policy?

In general, the TNReady calculator policy is based on two central beliefs: First, that calculators are important tools and, in order to be ready for career and college, students need to understand how to use calculators effectively. Second, in order to demonstrate mastery of the mathematics standards, students must demonstrate many skills without reliance on calculators.

More details on the specific calculators allowed and additional context can be found within [the math blueprints](#) on the department's website.

### 2. Why was the TNReady calculator policy modified?

The Tennessee mathematics standards were the driving force behind the modification of the assessment calculator policy. One important goal of the Tennessee assessment program is to track a student's progress toward being college and career ready upon graduating from high school. Developing a deep algebraic understanding of mathematics at the high school level plays a huge part in a student's mathematical readiness for college and career. In order to assess if a student is developing a deep understanding of key concepts as they progress towards high school, it is imperative that we get a true read of whether a student has developed a conceptual understanding of important mathematical milestones. Certain calculator functionalities inhibit our ability to ensure students have acquired this desired conceptual understanding.

For the past several years, there has been vast diversity in the technological opportunities available to students across our state. Our desire is to provide all Tennessee students with a fair and equitable assessment experience. Standardizing our calculator policy will help to ensure that all students have the same opportunities.

### 3. Will this policy remain the same when we begin teaching the newly adopted mathematics standards in 2017-18?

The department intends for the calculator policy to remain the same for subsequent assessment cycles. Additionally, it mirrors the calculators that will be available when we move to online assessments.

**4. How was it determined what calculator a student could use on the various assessments?**

The determination for which calculator was assigned to a particular grade band was made by comparing what mathematical concepts are in our state mathematics standards with the functionalities provided by different types of calculators.

**5. Why was the calculator policy not released until July 20, 2016?**

The calculator policy could not be solidified until the state identified a new assessment vendor, and the contract was not finalized and executed until mid-July.

**6. If there is a calculator-prohibited part of TNReady, why does it matter what calculator students have on the remaining portions of the assessment?**

TNReady is a cumulative assessment of grade-level standards, and the calculator-permitted section is not limited to any one particular type of mathematics. Some calculators have multiple functionalities besides those which aid a student in computation. These additional functionalities hinder the ability to assess our grade level standards.

**7. What are the instructional implications of the calculator policy?**

The calculator policy does not specify the type of calculators that can be used instructionally with students. Often students are provided the opportunity to independently discover the underpinnings of mathematical concepts through accessing tools provided by their teacher. Teachers decide which mathematical tools are best for the various learning opportunities within their classes. It is not necessary for the calculator that students use instructionally to match the TNReady calculator policy.