

Beginning on July 1, 2018, Maryland has used the term Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program (MCAP) as an umbrella for state assessments. MCAP provides information to educators, families, and the public on student progress towards proficiency on the Maryland state content standards. Through a strong assessment system, stakeholders gain an understanding of how schools are performing and where assistance can be directed to support student growth and achievement.

In Maryland, all students in tested grades (grades 3 – 8 and high school) must participate in either the regular or the alternate assessments. Students must be included to the fullest extent possible in all state assessment programs and have their assessment results incorporated in Maryland’s accountability system, unless documented as described in the [Maryland Assessment, Accessibility, and Accommodations Manual \(MAAAM\)](#). Federal legislation requires the participation of Students with Disabilities (SWD) that have Individual Education Plans (IEPs), students with 504 Plans, and multilingual learners (MLs) in standards-based instruction and assessment initiatives. Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities may take the Alternate Assessments if their IEP teams determine that they meet the eligibility criteria and cannot appropriately be assessed on the general assessments. More information about federal legislation and assessment requirements can be found in the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA).

Maryland currently operates the following state testing programs under the MCAP umbrella:

FALL	WINTER	SPRING	SUMMER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kindergarten Readiness Assessment¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English Language Arts/Literacy (Grade 10) Life Science (LS) MISA (High School) American Government (High School)¹ Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II² WIDA ACCESS (K-12) WIDA Alternate ACCESS (K-12)³ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English Language Arts/Literacy (Grades 3-8 and 10) Mathematics (Grades 3-8, Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II) Social Studies (Grade 8)¹ Maryland Integrated Science Assessment (MISA) (Grades 5 and 8) Life Sciences (LS) MISA (High School) American Government (High School)¹ Dynamic Learning Maps (ELA, Math) (grades 3-8 and 11)³ Alternate Maryland Integrated Science Assessment (Alt-MISA) (grades 5, 8, 11)³ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English Language Arts/Literacy (Grade 10) Life Sciences (LS) MISA (High School) American Government (High School)¹ Algebra I (High School)

Notes

- 1 Maryland State law (Md. Ed. Art §7-203) requires a Kindergarten Readiness Assessment, as well as a social studies assessment in middle school (grade 8) and an assessment in American Government for high school students. The Early Learning Assessment (ELA) is an optional assessment administered to students in both public and private prekindergarten settings in Maryland.
- 2 Students in grades 3–8 and 10 must participate in MCAP assessments only for the grade in which they are enrolled. For example, students enrolled in 7th grade will participate in the Grade 7 MCAP Mathematics assessment. **MIDDLE SCHOOL EXCEPTION:** Effective March 17, 2025, MSDE was granted a waiver allowing students in grades 6 – 7 who are enrolled in a high school mathematics course to take the corresponding MCAP mathematics assessment instead of the statewide grade-level assessment. For example, students in grade 6 who are enrolled in an Algebra I course will be permitted to participate in the MCAP Algebra I assessment. Once in high school, these students will participate in the MCAP Geometry, MCAP Algebra 2, or SAT as their more advanced mathematics assessment. This waiver is in effect from SY 2024-2025 through 2027-2028.
- 3 Alternate (Alt) assessments are administered to Maryland students with significant cognitive disabilities for any federally mandated assessment.
- 4 Beginning 2023-2024, students entering the ninth grade, the Maryland Comprehensive Assessment for science (LS MISA) and government (American Government) shall account for 20 percent of the student’s final grade in the respective high school level science and government courses (COMAR 13A.03.02).