



State Assessment Information for Parents What to Expect for the 2015-16 School Year

Overview

In 2009, the State of Colorado implemented new, more rigorous academic standards to ensure that all Colorado students are prepared for college and career success. These rigorous standards from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade will prepare Greeley-Evans School District 6 students with the problem-solving and critical-thinking skills they need to succeed in college and in the workforce.

Meaningful and relevant assessments work hand in hand with rigorous academic standards. The new Colorado Measures of Academic Success assessments are aligned with the Colorado Academic Standards and provide ongoing measures of student learning at each grade level. The rigorous standards were developed by educators and researchers, with significant input from college professors and workforce leaders. The Colorado Academic Standards set clear, consistent guidelines for what students should know and be able to do at each grade level across 10 subject areas. The content standards are English language arts - reading, writing, and communicating, mathematics, science, social studies, comprehensive health, physical education, arts, and world languages. The rigorous standards along with the aligned state assessments is intended to ensure that Colorado students have the necessary skills, knowledge, and critical-thinking skills to be successful for life after high school.

New State Assessments Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS)

The Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS), the new state assessments, are one of a variety of growth and achievement measures of students' academic progress. The Colorado Measures of Academic Success assessments are administered in the areas of English Language Arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. These assessments were designed to be administered online with a variety of interactive questions that are more engaging with alignment to 21st century teaching and learning practices.

After the first administration of the new state assessments in the spring of 2014 (in the content areas of social studies (grades 4 and 7) and science (grades 5 and 8)), the addition of English language arts and math assessments were administered in the spring of 2015. Student participation in CMAS is important because the results of the assessments help students, parents, schools, and district understand whether students have mastered the content they need to know at the end of that grade-level or course. Parents and guardians will be able to see their students' growth and achievement over time, and how their students' results compare to their peers across the district and the state.








In the state's accountability system, student results are used for the performance rating of schools and districts. The rating reflects student achievement and academic growth that is calculated to determine a district's accreditation and a school's plan-type: Accredited with Distinction; Accredited, Accredited with Improvement Plan; Accredited with Priority Improvement Plan, or Accredited with Turnaround Plan.

A new state law recognizes the rights of parents/guardians to control their student's education. The new law requires school boards to develop a policy to allow parents/guardians to excuse their students from participating in one or more state assessments. The district has developed a policy and procedures to inform parents and guardians of the new state law.

In addition, the new state law allows districts to use paper versions of any of the online tests given the district's

limitations on the number of computers or other devices needed for testing. The grade-level and content areas assessed in the Colorado Measures of Academic Success assessments are outlined below.

Colorado Measures of Academic Success Grade-level and Content Tested Areas

English Language Arts 	Grades 3 through 9	Science 	Grades 5, 8, and 11
Math $\frac{3}{4} + 3 = 7$ $4 + 3 = 7$ $7 = 7$	Grades 3 through 9 *Algebra I, Geometry, or Algebra II Course	College Preparatory Exam 	Grade 10
Social Studies 	Grade 4 and 7 CDE selected school sampling: schools participate every 3 years	College Entrance Exam 	Grade 11
ACCESS for ELLs 	Grades K – 12 An English language development assessment for English Language Learners	Colorado Alternate Assessments (CoAlt) 	Grades 3-11

Colorado Measures of Academic Success Testing Time

The assessment window for the CMAS assessments is set within a 3-week period, April 11 – 29, 2016. K-8 schools will be given a 4-week window in order to complete all assessments due to the additional grade-levels within the school. The percentage of time that state testing impact instruction in 2015-16 school year is less than 1%. Below is a table that details the impact of CMAS assessments on the total instruction time given in a school year:

English Language Arts and Math	Testing Time	% of Instruction Time
Grade 3	8.25 hrs.	.7%
Grades 4-5	8.5 hrs.	.7%
Grades 6-8	9.2 hrs.	.8%
Grade 9	9.7 hrs.	.9%
Science	Testing Time	% of Instruction Time
Grade 5	4.0 hrs.	.3%
Grade 8	4.0 hrs.	.3%
Grade 11	3.5 hrs.	.3%
*Social Studies	Testing Time	% of Instruction Time
Grade 4	4.0 hrs.	.3%
Grade 7	4.0 hrs.	.3%

*State sampling of schools for social studies every 3 years

Colorado Measures of Academic Success Information and Student Score Reports

As parents and educators receive the new student score reports, it is important to remember that the CMAS tests are newly designed measures based upon problem-solving and critical thinking skills necessary for students to succeed in college and careers in the 21st century. These assessments cannot be compared to the old TCAP or CSAP scores. The new tests will set new performance level benchmarks. Below is a table that outlines the important dates for the release of assessment results, and dates of administration for assessments in the summer and spring of 2016.

Colorado Measures of Academic Success 2015-16 Calendar
July 2015 Results released for elementary and middle school students' spring 2015 tests in science and social studies
August 2015 Results released for high school students' fall 2014 tests in science
November 2015 Results available for students' spring 2015 tests in English language arts and math
April 11 – 29, 2016 Administration of CMAS tests in science, social studies (state sampled selected schools (grades 4 & 7), English language arts, and math
Spring 2016 College preparatory exam for 10 th -grade students and college entrance exam for 11 th grade students
Summer 2016 Results available for elementary, middle and high school students' 2016 CMAS tests in science, social studies, English language arts and math

Colorado Measures of Academic Success Performance Levels

In the summer of 2015, educators, post-secondary faculty and workforce professionals collaborated to determine the range of scores that best matched the five performance levels based on performance level descriptors and the actual test results of students. The panel used the research benchmark studies to help them determine the percentage of students likely to be college and career ready, and the percentage of students who are likely to be on track for the next academic level. The research benchmark studies used were of SAT (a reasoning test), ACT (a content assessment), NAEP (the largest continuing and national assessment of core subjects), TIMSS (a series of international assessments of mathematics and science knowledge) and PISA (the test results of 15-year olds in math, science, and reading in over 65 nations and territories). Below are the five performance levels that will be used in the Student Score Reports. More information on the specific performance levels will be available with the release of the student performance reports.

CMAS ELA and Math Performance Levels

Level 5	Level 4	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1
Exceed Expectations	Met Expectations	Approached Expectations	Partially Met Expectations	Did Not Yet Meet Expectations

CMAS Science and Social Students Performance Levels

Level 4	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1
Distinguished Command	Strong Command	Moderate Command	Limited Command