



The Role of State Assessments in Increasing Academic Achievement



COLORADO
Department of Education

Colorado has a series of educational standards known as the Colorado Academic Standards that outline academic objectives for students in every grade across 12 content areas, including math, English language arts and science. The standards create learning expectations for what students should understand, know and be able to do at each grade level and in each content area. The end-of-year assessments – Colorado Measures of Academic Success, or CMAS – measure students’ mastery of the standards and the complex thinking and other critical skills students need to be successful in school and in life. The data from assessments are critical in determining if educational goals are being met and if students are on track to graduate prepared for college and careers.

Additionally, English learners in the third and fourth grade may take a form of CMAS in the Spanish language called the Colorado Spanish Language Arts assessment.

Purpose and value of state assessments

CMAS and PSAT/SAT are the only common measuring tools for Colorado students. The tests measure real-world skills like problem-solving and critical thinking and are aligned to classroom work, so teachers don’t have to “teach to the test.” Instruction based on the standards is the best preparation.

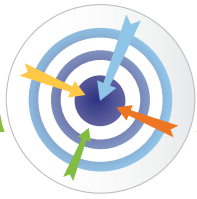
While state assessments are only one measure of student learning, having all Colorado students take this set of assessments gives parents important insights.

DID YOU KNOW?

The United States passed a federal law in 2015 that requires all states to administer statewide tests in certain grades and subjects. All students in these grades take state tests.

Not too long ago, some students were not included in testing. Back then, students with disabilities and English learners were often excluded.

By requiring all students to take the same test, schools and teachers can think about all students when they are planning.



How will results from the CMAS assessments help my child:

- CMAS results provide information that shows what your child has been learning and practicing in their classroom, and how well they are connecting with classroom instruction.
- CMAS results for your whole school let you know how well your school is teaching all students.
- Results provide you and other families in your community with information about how local schools are meeting the needs of all students.
- The results let you check your child's progress toward completing high school ready for a career or college.

How does taking state tests help my child's school?

- Taking the test provides critical information to the district and state on how well all students in your child's school are doing, so the school can be supported.
- Test results allow teachers and principals to see any differences between groups of students and make improvements to instruction, so that all students can succeed.
- The results highlight gaps in achievement, so steps can be taken to ensure all students are supported in making meaningful progress.
- The results help state policymakers and local school boards identify schools that may need more assistance or resources.

DID YOU KNOW?

State tests are not perfect but having information about how all students are doing will help schools improve instruction for you and other students.



Statewide testing is meant to show how schools are doing, so they can better meet the needs of all students.

Statewide testing helps identify if some groups of students are not getting the instruction they need, so that changes can be made that will improve learning for them.



How can I support my child?

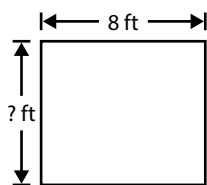
- Talk with your child and make sure they understand why they are taking state tests.
- Talk to your child’s teacher about any accessibility needs to see if there are supports or accommodations that might help your child access instruction and state tests.
- Use positive language about testing and help your child use positive self-talk such as, “I can do my best,” “mistakes are okay,” etc.
- Practice stress-reducing strategies such as breathing exercises and stretching with your child.
- Talk about testing as a regular part of learning and share your experiences with testing in school.

Practice items help students be ready

Parents are sometimes concerned that participating in these tests can cause anxiety in their child or that preparing for the tests takes away time from instruction. Because these tests are aligned to the Colorado Academic Standards and classroom instruction, they should not cause any more anxiety than any other tests students take. Also, practice items are available to help familiarize parents and students with test content and structure.

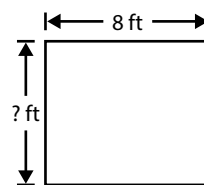
Here is an example of a CMAS Fourth Grade Math item in both English and Spanish:

The length of a rectangular room is 8 feet.
The area of the room is 56 square feet.



What is the perimeter, in feet, of the room?
Enter your answer in the box.

Un cuarto rectangular mide 8 pies de largo.
El cuarto tiene un área de 56 pies cuadrados.



¿Cuánto mide el perímetro del cuarto, en pies?
Escribe tu respuesta en el recuadro.



Parental excuse from participation

State law allows parents to excuse their children from taking state assessments. If a parent wants to excuse his or her child from participating in an assessment, the district is not allowed to impose negative consequences on the students or parents including prohibiting school attendance, imposing an unexcused absence, or prohibiting participation in extracurricular activities.

Likewise, districts cannot impose unreasonable burdens or requirements on a student to discourage the student from taking an assessment or to encourage the student's parent to excuse his/her child from the assessment. They must offer all students who are excused from testing the opportunity to participate in celebrations or incentives related to the assessments. Parents should know, however, that non-participation in state assessments means they will not have information on their child's attainment and growth on the state standards compared to other children.



DATA SECURITY

CDE is committed to ensuring that data on individual students are secure. The department has strict policies and procedures in place to maintain data security. For more information on data privacy and security, please go to [http:// www.cde.state.co.us/dataprivacyandsecurity](http://www.cde.state.co.us/dataprivacyandsecurity).

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Thanks to the [National Center on Educational Outcomes](#) for the research and messaging used in this document.



Why Participating in Statewide Testing Matters to Students



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Colorado's public school ninth- and 10th-graders take the PSAT, and 11th-graders take the SAT at no cost to the student. Third through eighth-grade students take Colorado Measures of Academic Success assessments in English Language Arts and math, while fifth, eighth and 11th- grade students take CMAS science assessments.

Additionally, English learners in the third and fourth grade may take a form of CMAS in the Spanish language called the CSLA.

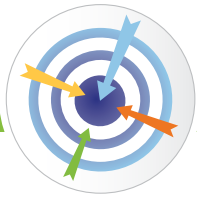
How does taking state tests help me?

- Taking the tests allows you to show what you've learned and practiced in your school.
- It lets you and your family know if your school is doing a good job supporting your learning.
- It gives you and your family information about how local schools in your community are meeting the needs of all students.
- It tells you and your family about your progress toward completing high school and success after high school, such as attending college and being ready for a career.

DID YOU KNOW?

Federal law requires all states to administer statewide tests in certain grades and subjects.

Not too long ago, some students were not included in testing. Back then, students with disabilities and English learners were often excluded.



How does taking state tests help my school?

- Taking the tests provide information to your principal and teachers about how well all students are doing at your school.
- It allows your principal and teachers to see any differences between groups of students and make improvements, so that all students can succeed.
- It helps leaders who make decisions know which schools need more money and help.
- It draws attention if some groups of students do not perform as well as others and allows educators to address the learning needs of these students.

Taking tests makes me anxious. What can I do to help?

- Talk with your family and teachers about things that can help you during the test (a seat far from the window where you won't be distracted, repeated directions if you often miss some of the details).
- Stay positive! Remember that test scores are just one piece of information to use to reach your goals.
- Remember that testing is a regular part of learning and is supposed to help guide learning.
- Practice strategies that help you relax (breathing exercises, stretching, muscle relaxation), and then remember to use them during the test.

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DID YOU KNOW?

By requiring all students to take the same test, schools and teachers can think about all students when they are planning.

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Statewide testing is meant to show how schools are doing, so they can better meet the needs of all students.

Statewide testing helps identify if some groups of students are not getting the instruction they need, so that changes can be made that will improve learning for them.

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Colorado Statewide Assessments 2022-23 Testing At-A-Glance



2022-23 State Testing Content Area and Time



GRADES	ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS	MATH	SCIENCE	PSAT	SAT	TOTAL HOURS
3	4h 30m	3h 15m	-	-	-	7h 45m
4	4h 30m	3h 15m	-	-	-	7h 45m
5	4h 30m	3h 15m	4h	-	-	11h 45m
6	5h 30m	3h 15m	-	-	-	8h 45m
7	5h 30m	3h 15m	-	-	-	8h 45m
8	5h 30m	3h 15m	4h	-	-	12h 45m
9	-	-	-	2h 35m	-	2h 35m
10	-	-	-	2h 55m	-	2h 55m
11	-	-	2h 30m	-	3h 15m*	5h 45m

Tests are broken down into individual sessions lasting between 50 and about 110 minutes

* Students who elect to take the additional optional essay will add about an hour to their SAT testing time, including breaks.

When will tests be given?

CMAS Tests

CMAS tests in English language arts, math and science will be administered in one window from April 10-28. All elementary and middle school science tests must be scheduled and completed during the April 10-28 testing window. Based on requests made in December, some districts may administer the English language arts tests and high school science CMAS tests earlier.

PSAT/SAT Tests

Colorado's ninth- and 10th-grade students will continue to take the PSAT, and 11th-grade students will take the SAT. The 2023 test date for the SAT is April 12 with a makeup date of April 25. Districts may choose April 12, 13 or 14 as their PSAT test date with the makeup dates between April 25-27.

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- To learn more, visit: <https://www.cde.state.co.us/communications/resourcesforparents>
- View all CDE fact sheets: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/communications/factsheetsandfaqs>

2023 Tiger Trades Academy CMAS Testing Schedule

Week One

4/3/2023 HS Science (11th Grade)

4/4/2023 8th Grade Science

4/5/2023 7th Grade ELA

4/6/2023 8th Grade ELA

Week Two

4/10/2023 7th Grade Math

4/11/2023 8th Grade Math

4/12/2023 SAT (11th Grade)

4/13/2023 PSAT10 (10th Grade)

Week Three

4/17/2023 PSAT9 (9th Grade)

4/18/2023 ELA Make-Ups

4/19/2023 Math Make-Ups

4/20/2023 Science Make-Ups

Week Four

4/24/2023 Regular Schedule

4/25/2023 SAT Make-Ups

4/26/2023 PSAT Make-Ups

4/27/2023 Regular Schedule

2023 La Junta High School CMAS Testing Schedule

Week One

4/3/2023 HS Science (11th Grade)

4/4/2023 8th Grade ELA

4/5/2023 7th Grade ELA

4/6/2023 Make-Ups

Week Two

4/10/2023 Make-Ups

4/11/2023 8th Grade Science

4/12/2023 SAT (11th Grade)

4/13/2023 PSAT10 (10th Grade)

Week Three

4/17/2023 PSAT9 (9th Grade)

4/18/2023 8th Grade Math

4/19/2023 7th Grade Math

4/20/2023 Make-Ups

Week Four

4/24/2023 CMAS Make-Ups

4/25/2023 SAT Make-Ups CMAS Make-Ups

4/26/2023 PSAT Make-Ups CMAS Make-Ups

4/27/2023 PSAT Make-Ups CMAS Make-Ups

2023 La Junta Intermediate School CMAS Testing Schedule

Week One	3rd Grade - AM	4th Grade - AM	5th Grade - AM	6th Grade - AM	5th Grade - PM
4/10/2023	Regular Schedule	Regular Schedule	Regular Schedule	Regular Schedule	Regular Schedule
4/11/2023	ELA Unit 1	ELA Unit 1	ELA Unit 1	ELA Unit 1	Science Unit 1
4/12/2023	ELA Unit 2	ELA Unit 2	ELA Unit 2	ELA Unit 2	Science Unit 2
4/13/2023	ELA Unit 3	ELA Unit 3	ELA Unit 3	ELA Unit 3	Science Unit 3
Week Two					
4/17/2023	Math Unit 1	Regular Schedule	Regular Schedule	Regular Schedule	
4/18/2023	Math Unit 2	Math Unit 1	Math Unit 1	Math Unit 1	
4/19/2023	Math Unit 3	Math Unit 2	Math Unit 2	Math Unit 2	
4/20/2023	Field Trip	Math Unit 3	Math Unit 3	Math Unit 3	
Week Three					
4/24/2023	Make-Ups	Make-Ups	Make-Ups	Make-Ups	
4/25/2023	Make-Ups	Make-Ups	Make-Ups	Make-Ups	
4/26/2023	Make-Ups	Make-Ups	Make-Ups	Make-Ups	
4/27/2023	Make-Ups	Make-Ups	Make-Ups	Make-Ups	