

Title I Information Packet for Families



MINNEAPOLIS
PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Urban Education. Global Citizens.

Your Rights in a Title I School
& A Guide to State and
District Testing

WE ARE A TITLE I SCHOOL. WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

Title I is a federal program that provides money to schools and districts to help us make sure all children have equal access to high-quality education, and to meet our state's educational standards. Title I status is based on the number of students in our school from low income families. **Our school is a schoolwide Title I program, which means all our students are able to benefit from the services we provide with our Title I funding.**

We are required to use Title I funding to improve the educational achievement of all students and engage our families in that process. School staff members work, with input from parents and the community, to develop a School Improvement Plan. The purpose of this plan is to improve our school's entire educational program.

WHAT ARE YOUR RIGHTS AS A FAMILY MEMBER IN A TITLE I SCHOOL?

We look forward to your involvement in school activities and your child's education. You will receive information throughout the school year to keep you informed about your child's educational progress and the progress the school is making toward helping all children meet high educational standards. You will receive invitations to discuss and give input on our School Improvement Plan and family engagement activities. You can find our School Improvement Plan and our Family Involvement Plan on our website.

AT A TITLE I SCHOOL, YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

- Request information about the qualifications of your child's teacher(s) or paraprofessional(s)
- Know how your child's school is rated on its state test scores
- Know any rules for student participation in mandated assessments
- Expect regular communication with your school in your chosen language
- Work with other families and staff to develop a compact between our school and our families
- Help plan how money for family involvement should be spent
- Work with teachers, other families, and the school principal to develop a family involvement plan
- Ask for a meeting with your school principal or your child's teacher at any time

Requesting information about qualifications of a teacher/paraprofessional:

Our staff are committed to helping your child develop the social, educational, and critical thinking he or she needs to succeed in school and beyond. Our commitment includes making sure that all of our teachers and paraprofessionals are extremely skilled. You have the right to request information about the professional qualifications of your child's teacher(s) or paraprofessional(s). Please send requests to staffing@mpls.k12.mn.us. A paraprofessional provides academic or other support for students under the direct supervision of a teacher. **If you request this information, the**

district or school will provide you with the following information:

- If the teacher has met State certification and licensing requirements for the grade levels and subjects for which the teacher provides instruction
- If State certification and licensing requirements have been waived (is not being required at this time) for the teacher, under emergency or other temporary status
- If the teacher is teaching in the field for which they are certified or licensed
- If the teacher has met State-approved or State-recognized certification, licensing, registration, or other comparable requirements. These requirements apply to the professional discipline in which the teacher is working and may include providing English language instruction to English learners, special education or related services to students with disabilities, or both
- If your child is receiving Title I or Special Education services from paraprofessionals, his or her qualifications.

WHY DO WE TEST STUDENTS?

We test (also called assess) students to answer key questions such as:

- Are students learning what we intend for them to be learning?
- Are all students improving and being appropriately challenged?

We will not increase student learning by just testing students. The impact of testing students comes in how our teachers use student test results (also called data). Test data is used as part of a reflection about our systems and practices at the classroom level, school level, and district level.

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF TESTS WE USE AT MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS?

1. **State accountability assessments** are used with all students to determine if students are meeting grade level standards and to monitor systems at a school, district, state, and federal level.
2. **Universal Screeners** are used with all students to determine which students are on track for their grade level and making growth. It can also be used to monitor strategies at a school and district level.
3. **Summative Classroom Assessments** are used with all students to determine if students mastered the skill, learning target, and/or standard that the teacher was targeting. (For example, in class tests, end of chapter tests, etc.)
4. **Diagnostic Assessments** are used with some students who are low performing and students who are not showing growth to identify which particular skills those students need support with.
5. **Progress Monitoring Assessments** are used with some students who are receiving targeted interventions on a regular (weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly) basis to determine if the student is making enough progress as the result of a skill-based intervention. (For example, help with reading.)
6. **Formative Classroom Assessments** are used with all students on a daily basis to reflect on

WHICH TESTS ARE REQUIRED BY THE STATE AND DISTRICT?

State required tests: Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) or Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS) (3-8, High School), ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS (for English Learners only), and ACT for All (Grade 10).

District required tests: FAST for K-8 and MAP for Grade 9, Common Language Assessments for English Learners and the CogAT assessment for all students in Grade 2 and students referred in Grades K, 1, 3, and 4. More information on these assessments can be found in the next section, “Minneapolis Public Schools Assessment Calendar 2018-2019.”

CAN WE SAY ‘NO’ TO TESTING?

Families have the right to decline student participation in state and district testing. Families need to request an Opt Out form from their school, fill it out saying which state or district test they do not want their student to take, and return it to school. Forms must be filled out yearly. For more information on saying “no” to testing, please see page 7 for guidance provided by the Minnesota Department of Education.

MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS ASSESSMENT CALENDAR 2019-2020

	Assessment	Required By	Time (estimated)	Test Dates	Grade Level													
					K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
FALL	Common Language Assessment	MPS - Multilingual	30-40 minutes	Complete by Oct. 8, 2019	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆								
	Kindergarten Literacy (FAST earlyReading)	MPS - Assessments	10 minutes	Aug. 26 - Sept. 27, 2019	■	■												
	Kindergarten Math (COM)	MPS - Teaching & Learning	15-20 minutes	Aug. 26 - Sept. 27, 2019	■	■												
	FAST• (aReading & aMath)	MPS - Assessments	15 - 30 minutes each	Sept. 10 - Oct. 4, 2019		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■				
	MAP• (Reading & Math)	MPS - Assessments	45 minutes each	Sept. 10 - Oct. 4, 2019											■			
	Civics Exam - Graduation Requirement	State of Minnesota	50 questions; No Opt-Out Option	Ongoing											■			
WINTER	CogAT	MPS - Teaching & Learning	G2 Screener: 1 hour/K,1, 3, 4 Full Test: 3 hours	Oct. 21 - Nov. 8, 2019		●	■	●	●									
	Common Language Assessment	MPS - Multilingual	30-40 minutes	Complete by Jan. 21, 2019	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆								
	FAST• (aReading & aMath)	MPS - Assessments	15-30 minutes each	Dec. 9 - Jan. 16, 2020		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■				
	MAP• (High School Only)	MPS - Assessments	45 minutes each	Dec. 9 - Jan. 16, 2020											■			
	Kindergarten Literacy (FAST earlyReading)	MPS - Assessments	10 minutes	Dec. 9 - Jan. 16, 2020	■	■												
	Kindergarten Math (COM)	MPS - Teaching & Learning	15-25 minutes	Dec. 9 - Jan. 16, 2020	■	■												
	ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS for ELLs •	State of Minnesota	Listening: 40 minutes. Reading: 35 minutes. Speaking: 30 minutes. Writing: 50-65 minutes	Jan. 27 - March 20, 2020	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆

MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS ASSESSMENT CALENDAR

Assessment Name	Description & Purpose	Format	More Information
ACCESS for ELLs /Alternate ACCESS for ELLs	ACCESS for ELLs test items are written from the model performance indicators of WIDA's five English Language Proficiency (ELP) standards: Social & Instructional Language, Language of Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies and test forms are divided into five grade level clusters (testing grades 1-12).	Online, or paper based accommodations	ACCESS Parent Fact Sheet (8/2017)
ACT for All	On May 7, 2018, Citywide Student Government voted to move the ACT for All to April 24, 2019, with no make-up date.		For questions on the ACT, please Contact James Bierma James.Bierma@mpls.k12.mn.us
Civics Exam	Beginning with students enrolled in 9th grade in school year 2017-18, all students must take and pass a civics exam before graduating. Passing is 30+ out of 50 questions correct. Students cannot be prevented from graduating, if they do not pass the test. The civics exam connects to a broad set of social studies standards.	The test may be translated into other languages for EL students.	MN Department of Education
CogAT	All second graders and students referred for screening in grades K, 1, 3 and 4.	Online, or paper based accommodations	Questions? Contact Christina Ramsey Christina.Ramsey@mpls.k12.mn.us
COM	Concepts of Math (COM) is a Teaching & Learning Math assessment for Kindergarten used to drive instruction.		Questions? Contact Marium Toure Marium.Toure@mpls.k12.mn.us
FAST	FAST will be used as district-wide universal screener for all students in K-8 in order to assess students' broad reading and math skills. The FAST earlyReading assessment will be given to Kindergarten students and the aReading and aMath assessments will be given to students in grades 1-8.	aReading & aMath: online and adaptive. earlyReading: 1:1 admin	FAST Assessments in Minneapolis Public Schools
MCA	MCA measures the success of instruction, based on the Minnesota Academic Standards. Results can be used to see if students are mastering key content knowledge and attaining the skills necessary for future success in education and the workforce. *Reading and Math are adaptive tests. Science is linear (same test for each student).	Online, or paper based accommodations.	MDE/Students and Families/Statewide Testing

MTAS	MTAS is a performance-based assessment in reading, mathematics and science for students with significant cognitive disabilities. It is the alternate assessment to the MCA, and has substantial reductions in the complexity of the academic content standards.	Paper	MTAS (scroll to middle of page) MTAS Parent Fact Sheet (08/2017)
MAP	MAP Reading and Math will be used as district-wide universal screening assessments for students in grade 9.	Online and adaptive.	
Grade 8 Physical Science		Online	Questions? Contact Jenn Rose jennifer.rose@mpls.k12.mn.us.



Parent/Guardian Guide and Refusal for Student Participation in Statewide Testing

This information will help parents/guardians make informed decisions that benefit their children, schools, and communities.

Why statewide testing?

Minnesota values its educational system and the professionalism of its educators. Minnesota educators created the academic standards which are rigorous and prepare our students for career and college.

The statewide assessments are how we as a state measure that curriculum and daily instruction in our schools are being aligned to the academics standards, ensuring all students are being provided an equitable education. Statewide assessment results are just one tool to monitor that we are providing our students with the education that will ensure a strong workforce and knowledgeable citizens.

Why does participation matter?

A statewide assessment is just one measure of your student’s achievement, but your student’s participation is important to understand how effectively the education at your student’s school is aligned to the academic standards.

- In Minnesota’s implementation of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act, a student not participating in the statewide assessments will not receive an individual score and for the purpose of school and district accountability calculations, including opportunities for support and recognition, will not be considered “proficient.”
- Students who receive a college-ready score on the high school MCA are not required to take a remedial, noncredit course at a Minnesota State college or university in the corresponding subject area, potentially saving the student time and money.
- Educators and policy makers use information from assessments to make decisions about resources and support provided.
- Parents and the general public use assessment information to compare schools and make decisions about where to purchase a home or to enroll their children.
- School performance results that are publicly released and used by families and communities, are negatively impacted if students do not participate in assessments.
- English learners not taking ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS for ELLs will not receive a score to meet English learner program exiting criteria.

Academic Standards and Assessments

What are academic standards?

The [Minnesota K–12 Academic Standards](#) are the statewide expectations for student academic achievement. They identify the knowledge and skills that all students must achieve in a content area and are organized by grade level. School districts determine how students will meet the standards by developing courses and curriculum aligned to the academic standards.

What is the relationship between academic statewide assessments and the academic standards?

The statewide assessments in mathematics, reading, and science are used to measure whether students, and their school and district, are meeting the academic standards. Statewide assessments are one measure of how well students are doing on the content that is part of their daily instruction. It is also a measure of how well schools and districts are doing in aligning their curriculum and teaching the standards.

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA) and Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS)	ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for English Learners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on the Minnesota Academic Standards; given annually in grades 3–8 and high school in reading and mathematics; given annually in grades 5, 8, and high school for science. • Majority of students take the MCA. • MTAS is an option for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on the WIDA English Language Development Standards. • Given annually to English learners in grades K–12 in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. • Majority of English learners take ACCESS for ELLs. • Alternate ACCESS for ELLs is an option for English learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

Why are these assessments effective?

Minnesota believes that in order to effectively measure what students are learning, testing needs to be more than answering multiple choice questions.

- To answer questions, students may need to type in answers, drag and drop images and words, or manipulate a graph or information.
- The Reading and Mathematics MCA are adaptive, which means the answers a student provides determine the next questions the student will answer.
- The Science MCA incorporates simulations, which require students to perform experiments in order to answer questions.

All of these provide students the opportunity to apply critical thinking needed for success in college and careers and show what they know and can do.

Are there limits on local testing?

As stated in Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.301, for students in grades 1–6, the cumulative total amount of time spent taking locally adopted districtwide or schoolwide assessments must not exceed 10 hours per school year. For students in grades 7–12, the cumulative total amount of time spent taking locally adopted districtwide or schoolwide assessments must not exceed 11 hours per school year. These limits do not include statewide testing.

In an effort to encourage transparency, the statute also requires a district or charter school, before the first day of each school year, to publish on its website a comprehensive calendar of standardized tests to be administered in the district or charter school during that school year. The calendar must provide the rationale for administering each assessment and indicate whether the assessment is a local option or required by state or federal law.

What if I choose not to have my student participate?

Parents/guardians have a right to not have their student participate in state-required standardized assessments. Minnesota Statutes require the department to provide information about statewide assessments to parents/guardians and include a form to complete if they refuse to have their student participate. This form follows on the next page and includes an area to note the reason for the refusal to participate. Your student's district may require additional information.

A school or district may have additional consequences beyond those mentioned in this document for a student not participating in the state-required standardized assessments. There may also be consequences for not participating in assessments selected and administered at the local level. Please contact your school for more information regarding local decisions.

When do students take the assessments?

Each school sets their testing schedule within the state testing window. Contact your student's school for information on specific testing days.

- The MCA and MTAS testing window begins in March and ends in May.
- The ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs testing window begins at the end of January and ends in March.

When do I receive my student's results?

Each summer, individual student reports are sent to school districts and are provided to families no later than fall conferences. The reports can be used to see your child's progress and help guide future instruction.

How much time is spent on testing?

Statewide assessments are taken one time each year; the majority of students test online. On average, the amount of time spent taking statewide assessments is **less than 1 percent of instructional time** in a school year. The assessments are not timed and students can continue working as long as they need.

Why does it seem like my student is taking more tests?

The statewide required tests are limited to those outlined in this document. Many districts make local decisions to administer additional tests that the state does not require. Contact your district for more information.

Where do I get more information?

Students and families can find out more on our [Statewide Testing page](http://education.mn.gov) (education.mn.gov > Students and Families > Programs and Initiatives > Statewide Testing).