



# Colorado Measures of Academic Success

## WHAT TO EXPECT FOR THE 2017-18 SCHOOL YEAR

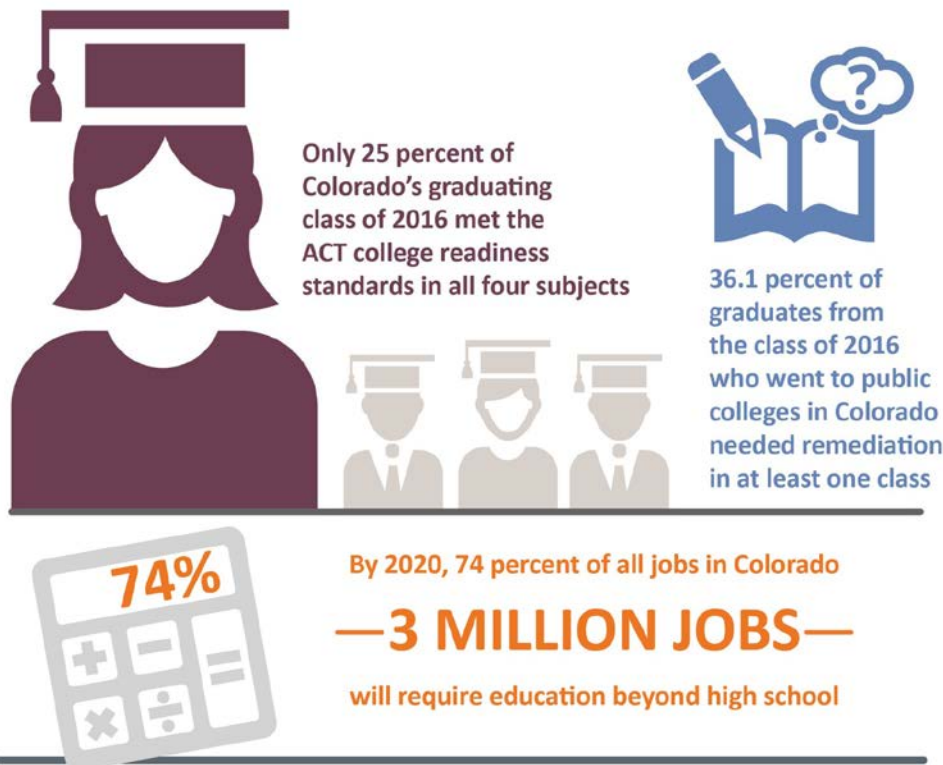


**COLORADO**  
Department of Education

### Overview

In 2009 Colorado implemented more rigorous academic standards to ensure that all Colorado students are prepared for college and career success. Fully implemented in the 2013-14 school year, 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](#), including English language arts, math, science and social studies. The rigorous standards were designed by educators and researchers, with significant input from higher education and workforce leaders, to help students prepare for life after high school. Prior to the adoption of the standards, too many students in Colorado were graduating from high school without the problem-solving and critical-thinking skills needed to succeed in college and in the workforce. These standards were designed to change that.

### The need for rigorous standards



#### What is different about these standards?

Across all 10 content areas, the standards demand more of our students and teachers than previous standards

#### RIGOR

Students use inquiry, critical thinking and creative processes to solve problems

#### RELEVANCY

Students engage in real world scenarios that require the application and transfer of concepts and skills

#### DISCIPLINARY LITERACY

Students learn to speak, think, work and argue like mathematicians, artists, scientists, authors and historians

### Assessments align with rigorous standards

To accurately measure student mastery of these skills and expectations, Colorado adopted assessments that align with the [Colorado Academic Standards](#). Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) assessments are the state's common measurement tool of student progress at the end of the school year in English language arts, math, science and social studies. Designed to be administered online, the tests feature a variety of interactive questions that are engaging and aligned with 21st century teaching and learning practices.

# WHAT TO EXPECT FOR THE 2017-18 SCHOOL YEAR

The standards-aligned assessments help educators and parents know how their students are performing and growing over time and how they compare to their peers across the district and the state.

## CMAS tests: mathematics, English language arts, science and social studies

State science and social studies tests measuring the Colorado Academic Standards were administered online in Colorado for the first time in the 2013-14 school year. The [Colorado Department of Education](#), testing contractor Pearson, and Colorado educators collaborated to develop these assessments, ensuring alignment to the Colorado Academic Standards, as well as innovative ways of measuring knowledge and understanding.

The English language arts and math assessments were initially developed in collaboration with the Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC). Colorado is currently working to develop test items just for CMAS English language arts and math assessments, but while that work is underway, items from the PARCC assessment will continue to be used.

## College Board’s high school assessments

The Colorado legislature passed a law in 2017 that amended the high-school testing requirements and replaced the ninth-grade assessments with one aligned to the Colorado Academic Standards as well as to the 10th-grade assessment. The PSAT 10 that high school sophomores have taken for the past two years is required to be aligned with the state’s college entrance exam that 11th-graders take – the SAT. In spring 2018, Colorado ninth-graders will take the PSAT as the statewide assessment in English language arts and math for the first time, replacing the Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) tests in those subjects for the ninth grade.

## 2017-18 tests

In the 2017-18 school year, CMAS testing will take place from **April 9 – 27**. However, the Colorado Department of Education will allow districts to begin testing online earlier in the content areas of science for high school and English language arts and math for all grades if they cannot complete testing within the allotted timeframe due to limitations on the number of computers or other devices needed for testing. The maximum test window for science and social studies is three weeks and for English language arts and math is five weeks.

State law allows districts to use paper versions of any online test.

**Colorado State Assessment  
2017-18 Calendar**

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**AUGUST 2017**

CMAS English language arts, math, science and social studies, PSAT, and SAT 2017 results publicly released

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**APRIL 9 – 27, 2018**

Official CMAS English language arts, math, science and social studies administration window

**APRIL 10, 11, 12 2018**

PSAT administered to 9th- and 10th-grade students

**APRIL 10, 2018**







SAT administered to 11th-grade students

**SUMMER 2018**

2018 Results available for CMAS English language arts, math science and social studies, as well as PSAT and SAT

# WHAT TO EXPECT FOR THE 2017-18 SCHOOL YEAR

## Which tests will students take?

|   |                                       |   |  |                |                    |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|--|----------------|--------------------|
|  | <b>ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS/LITERACY</b> | Grades 3 through 8  |  | <b>SCIENCE</b> | Grades 5, 8 and 11 |
|  | <b>MATH</b>                           | Grades 3 through 8  |  | <b>PSAT</b>    | Grades 9 and 10    |
|  | <b>SOCIAL STUDIES</b>                 | Grades 4 and 7<br>(sampling approximately 1/3 of schools participating) |  | <b>SAT</b>     | Grade 11           |

## Why are statewide tests important?

CMAS tests are the only common measuring tool for students in grades 3 through 8 in Colorado. Participation is important because results help students, parents, schools and districts understand whether students have mastered the content they need to know by the end of the school year and are on track to be ready for college or career after graduation. At the same time, state law requires local school boards to develop a policy allowing parents to excuse their students from participating in one or more state assessments. According to the law, districts cannot impose negative consequences on students or parents if a parent excuses their student from an assessment. Likewise, districts cannot impose burdens on students to discourage them from participating in an assessment.

## How will states tests be used?

Parents should know whether their children are gaining the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in today's complex world. CMAS is the only common measurement tool for Colorado students, helping teachers and parents understand whether students have mastered the content they need to know by the end of each school year in order to be on track for college and career success. Parents can also use CMAS scores to see how their students and schools are doing compared to other students and schools across the district and the state.

Schools and districts can use CMAS results to make improvements to instruction or to develop additional support and enrichment for students who need more help mastering the standards.

CMAS results from the 2016-17 school year will be used for school and district accreditation ratings in 2017 and for educator evaluations in the 2017-18 school year.

Even after the scores become part of accountability measures, they will not serve as the sole measurement for schools and teachers – other factors will still apply.

## When will results be publicly available?

## WHAT TO EXPECT FOR THE 2017-18 SCHOOL YEAR

School districts received their student-level CMAS results in June. School, district- and state-level summary results of students' 2017 tests in English language arts, math, science, social studies, PSAT and SAT were released in August.

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