

# Why Participating in State Testing Matters to Students



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 (CMAS) assessments in English language arts (ELA) and math, while fifth, eighth and 11th- grade students take CMAS science assessments.

Additionally, multilingual learners in grades three and four who are identified as Non English Proficient (NEP) or Limited English Proficient (LEP) may take the Spanish language assessment called the CSLA instead of ELA.

## 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.



**COLORADO**  
Department of Education

## 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 provides 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 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.

CMAS practice resources are publicly available at <https://coassessments.com/practice-resources/>

**LEARN**  
**MORE**



## DID YOU KNOW?

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

State tests provide information that can help schools improve instruction for you and for other Colorado students.

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

State 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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