

# MARYLAND HIGH SCHOOL ASSESSMENTS (HSA)

June 2011

<p><b>What are the Maryland High School Assessments (HSA)?</b></p>	<p>The HSA are tests in three core subjects: algebra/data analysis, biology, and English. Students take each test whenever they complete the course. For example, some students may take algebra in seventh grade while others may not take it until tenth grade or later. The tests contain multiple-choice questions that are based on the content outlined in Maryland’s Core Learning Goals. More information on the Core Learning Goals and sample test questions are available at <a href="http://mdk12.org/assessments/high_school/what_will">http://mdk12.org/assessments/high_school/what_will</a>.</p>
<p><b>Must students pass the HSA in order to graduate from high school?</b></p>	<p>Beginning with the graduating class of 2009 (students entering grade 9 in fall 2005), students are required to earn a satisfactory score on the HSA in order to earn a Maryland High School Diploma. Students have several options in fulfilling this requirement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pass all three HSA. The passing scores are: algebra/data analysis (412), biology (400), and English (396).</li> <li>• Earn at least a combined score of 1208 on the three assessments. The combined-score option allows students to offset lower performance on one test with higher performance on another test.</li> <li>• Earn passing scores on state-approved substitute tests and substitute one or more of those scores for passing scores on the HSA. Students must have scores of 3, 4, or 5 on selected Advanced Placement tests or scores of 5, 6, or 7 on selected International Baccalaureate tests.</li> <li>• Complete participation in the Bridge Plan for Academic Validation. Students Complete an Academic Validation Project package that is selected to help the student demonstrate the content and skills related to one or more HSAs that the student has failed to pass after at least two attempts.</li> </ul> <p>To earn a Maryland High School Diploma, students must still meet all credit, service-learning, and attendance requirements as well as any local school system requirements. A summary of state graduation requirements is available on the Maryland State Department of Education Web site at <a href="http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/testing/hsa/">www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/testing/hsa/</a>.</p>
<p><b>What happened to the Government HSA?</b></p>	<p>The last administration of the Government HSA was in May 2011. Students graduating in June 2011 were in the last class required to meet the Government HSA requirement, regardless of the year they entered grade 9. Students graduating in or after 2012 still need to take the Government <i>course</i>. Students who have already taken the Government HSA may use their score on the Government HSA to meet the graduation requirement if they achieve a combined score of 1602 on all four assessments. This would be beneficial to those students who may have a stronger score on the Government HSA than on the other assessments.</p>

<p><b>How and when are scores reported?</b></p>	<p>Within six weeks after testing, the testing vendor sends students' scores to the local school system. The local school system then sends the scores to parents. Scores for schools, school systems, and the state are published annually in mid-August on the Web at <a href="http://www.mdreportcard.org">www.mdreportcard.org</a>.</p> <p>Students' scores are reported as scale scores which range from 240 to 650. Maryland uses a scale score to provide a more precise measurement of a student's achievement and to assure that tests given at different times are comparable. Local school systems place students' HSA performance on the students' official records.</p>
<p><b>What happens if a student does not pass a test?</b></p>	<p>Students who do not pass one or more HSAs must be offered locally administered or approved assistance. Each school system has developed strategies for providing assistance, which could include sample test reviews, tutoring, or after-school or Saturday instruction. After completing an academic assistance program, students can retake the assessment during the next administration of the test. To help with intervention and remediation, the state has created a series of online courses in HSA subject areas. These resources are available at <a href="http://hsaexam.org">http://hsaexam.org</a>.</p>
<p><b>How were the HSAs developed?</b></p>	<p>Teachers and other educators, parents, business leaders, community members, and educational and professional organizations from across Maryland collaborated on the development of the HSA. Each test item undergoes a comprehensive review process before it is included in an assessment.</p> <p>The State Board of Education set HSA passing scores for algebra/data analysis, and biology in August 2003 and for English in October 2005. MSDE recommended these scores to the Board after conducting thorough standard-setting procedures that involved more than 100 teachers, administrators, instructional supervisors, parents, and testing experts.</p>
<p><b>How does the HSA relate to the Maryland School Assessment?</b></p>	<p>The Maryland School Assessment (MSA) fulfills the elementary and middle school testing requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). The content and format of the MSA help prepare students for success on the HSA. Together, the two testing programs provide schools, teachers, and parents, a good picture of student performance. The algebra/data analysis, biology, and English HSA are used to fulfill the high school testing requirements of NCLB, which requires states to report the number of students performing at proficient and advanced levels. The cutoff score for proficiency is 412 for algebra, 400 for biology, and 396 for English. The cutoff score for advanced is 450 for algebra, 452 for biology, and 429 for English.</p>
<p><b>What are the Modified High School Assessments (Mod-HSAs)?</b></p>	<p>The Mod-MSAs are alternatives to the tests in the HSA program and are designed to students with disabilities who, based on a decision-making process undertaken by their IEP team, meet specific eligibility criteria. The Mod-MSAs are based on On-level Academic Content Standards and Modified Academic Achievement Standards. The eligibility criteria are outlined in appendix B of the Maryland Accommodations Manual.</p>

For more information, call 410.767.0600 (Baltimore area) or 1.888.246.0016 (toll free) or visit our website at [MarylandPublicSchools.org](http://MarylandPublicSchools.org)

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