MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Ensuring a bright future for every child

Mississippi Assessment Program (MAP) Key Messages

The following messages were developed to help school leaders and educators communicate about the Mississippi Assessment Program (MAP). These general messages introduce the new assessment, explain why it was developed, and provide information about how MAP helps guide teaching and learning.

Although listed as talking points below, the messages may be used for any type of communication about MAP, including presentations, newsletters to parents, web sites, social media or other communications vehicles.

Official Name

Mississippi Assessment Program (MAP)

Key Messages

- **MAP is the new statewide assessment** for English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics for grades 3-8 and Algebra I and English II.
- **MAP was specifically developed for Mississippi** because the state adopted higher academic standards to guide teaching and learning. New tests are needed to accurately measure student mastery of the more rigorous standards. Mississippi educators participated in the development of MAP.
- **MAP assesses students on the content and skills they learn during the school year.** MAP questions are aligned to the Mississippi College and Career Ready Standards, which are the set of learning goals for ELA and Mathematics for each grade level.
- **MAP provides valuable information about student progress.** Test results identify students' strengths and areas for improvement to ensure they are on track for the next grade and eventually, college and career. While no single test can give a complete picture of achievement, MAP is one of many measures, including student grades and teacher reports, that combined, provide a complete picture about student progress.

Background

- In 2010, Mississippi adopted higher K-12 standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics to ensure all students move from grade to grade with the academic knowledge and skills necessary for success beyond high school. These standards are called the Mississippi College and Career Ready Standards.

MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
Ensuring a bright future for every child

- In 2014-2015, Mississippi students took their first set of tests aligned to the Mississippi College and Career Ready Standards. These tests were developed by the Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) and were administered in 11 states. Mississippi is no longer a member of PARCC.

- In 2015-2016, Mississippi developed and implemented its own test aligned to the Mississippi College and Career Ready Standards. The official name for this test is the Mississippi Assessment Program (MAP).

- We are continuing to support teachers across our districts through professional development on the new assessments so that they can further strengthen instruction.

- In the same way, we are making sure every school and district have the resources they need to help students who may be struggling and need additional assistance.



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Ensuring a bright future for every child



MISSISSIPPI ASSESSMENT PROGRAM (MAP)

Valuable Guide on the Path to Student Success

MAP KEY FACTS

- MAP is the new statewide assessment for English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics for grades 3-8 and Algebra I and English II. MAP replaces the state's previous ELA and Mathematics tests.
- Mississippi educators participated in the development of MAP for Mississippi students.
- MAP tests students on the content and skills they learn during the school year.
- MAP provides valuable information about whether students are on track for the next grade level and on the path to success after high school.

Higher Standards Require Higher-Quality Tests

Mississippi raised the bar for what we expect students to know and be able to do, so we have changed the way we measure student progress through our state tests. MAP is a Mississippi-developed test to measure student mastery of the Mississippi College and Career Ready Standards, which are the set of learning goals that guide teaching and learning in Mississippi classrooms.

MAP Challenges Students

MAP goes deeper than traditional multiple choice tests by testing critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Students are required to apply their knowledge and skills to address real-world problems and describe their reasoning – skills they will be required to have in college and the workplace.

MAP Provides Valuable Information

MAP results will provide a more detailed picture of student learning by providing specific information on which skills students have mastered and where they need additional support or challenges. When combined with student grades and teacher reports, MAP helps parents stay informed about their child's progress from year to year and ensure that their child is on the path toward success from grade to grade and beyond high school.

VALUE OF MAP

- **Challenges your child** to think critically & solve real-world problems.
- **Goes beyond multiple choice** and asks your child to explain his or her answers.
- **Provides accurate information** on whether your child is on track.
- **Provides one measure** of your child's academic success.
- **Identifies low and high performing** schools that need support to improve or to share best practices with others.

STAY INFORMED

Talk frequently with your child's teacher about his/her academic performance. Family involvement is key to student success.

Learn more about MAP at:
www.mde.k12.ms.us/OSA/MAP

MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE AND CAREER READY STANDARDS

Learn more about the Mississippi College and Career Ready Standards at:
www.mde.k12.ms.us/MCCRS

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Ensuring a bright future for every child

Mississippi Assessment Program (MAP)
Frequently Asked Questions for Parents

1. **What is the Mississippi Assessment Program (MAP)?**
   MAP is the required state assessment for English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics for students in grades 3-8 and high school Algebra I and English II. MAP, which replaces our previous annual assessments, is aligned to the Mississippi College and Career Ready Standards, which means it measures students on the content and skills they have learned during the school year. Mississippi teachers participated in the development of MAP to identify students' strengths and areas for improvement to ensure they are on track for the next grade and eventually, college and career.

2. **How is MAP different from previous state assessments?**
   MAP is a Mississippi-developed assessment that tests students on critical thinking and problem-solving. The test goes beyond multiple-choice questions to get a deeper understanding of students' learning. Students are required to apply their knowledge and skills to address real-world problems and describe their reasoning. With the exception of the writing portion of the ELA test, students will take the MAP test on a computer.

3. **Is there an alternate test for students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities (SCD)?**
   Yes. The alternate test for students with SCD is called MAP-A. It includes ELA and Mathematics tests for grades 3-8, science tests for grades 5 and 8, and tests for Algebra I, English II and Biology I.

4. **What if my child receives special education or English language services?**
   Students with IEPs or English Language Learners are also eligible for accommodations on the assessments. Talk with your child's teacher if you have questions about eligibility or the types of accommodations available.

5. **When will my child take the MAP test?**
   MAP tests will be administered during the testing window of April 25, 2016 to May 17, 2016. Your child's teacher will provide you with specific test dates.

6. **How much time will my child spend on the annual MAP test?**
   The maximum test times range from approximately 3.5 to 4.5 hours. Most tests are scheduled over a two-day period. Overall, students spend less than 2 percent of classroom time taking the annual MAP test.

   Since the assessments are aligned to our state standards, all learning prepares students for these assessments. Good teaching will always be the best method of preparing

students for success—whether that's success on an assessment, a project or presentation, or whether it's being prepared for the next grade.

7. **Why does my child take the MAP test?**
   MAP provides valuable information about your child's strengths and areas for improvement so you and your child's teacher can ensure your child is on track for the next grade and eventually, college and career. When combined with other measures, including teacher reports and student grades, MAP helps provide a complete picture of student achievement. MAP also helps ensure schools are meeting the needs of all students by comparing student performance across schools and districts.

8. **Why is my child's participation important?**
   MAP serves as an "academic check-up." Although it is only one measure of your child's progress, the scores on MAP can be compared from one year to the next. This makes them a useful tool to ensure your child is making progress and is on track for the next grade level and to graduate prepared for the next step.

9. **Will the MAP help my child improve?**
   Yes. MAP score reports break down each subject into different categories of skills, and shows how well your child performed in each. This helps you and your child's teacher understand where your child is doing well and where he or she needs more support. You can use this information to guide a discussion with your child's teacher(s) about additional supports or challenges needed in class and other ways to help build your child's skillset at home. Teachers will use this information to guide their instruction and provide more support and challenges when needed.

10. **How will my child prepare for the annual MAP test?**
    Since the MAP tests are aligned to our state standards, what students are learning throughout the school year prepares them for the tests. Good teaching will always be the best method of preparing students for success — whether that's success on a test, a presentation or project, or to move on to the next grade.

11. **When will I see my child's MAP results?**
    Results for tests taken in the 2015-16 school year will be released in fall 2016. The delay is due to the standard-setting process, which takes place after a new test is administered for the first time. In subsequent years, MAP results will be available before the end of the school year.

12. **Where can I go for more information?**
    For more information on the MAP test, including links to sample test items, visit www.mde.k12.ms.us/osa/map