

## Questions and Answers about the Graduation Assessment Requirements

### What are graduation assessment requirements?

In order to be eligible for a diploma from a Minnesota public high school, all students must fulfill graduation assessment requirements. Based on the revisions to Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.30, the graduation assessment requirements have changed. There are different routes to meeting graduation assessment requirements depending on what year students were first enrolled in grade 8. Parents/guardians should contact their student's school for further information.

With the changes to the graduation assessment requirements, additional details and information will continue to be provided on the MDE website as needed. [Please refer to the Just for Parents section of the MDE website for the most up-to-date information.](#) (Go to Just for Parents > Testing Information.)

### What are the routes to meeting state graduation assessment requirements?

#### ***Grade 12 Student and Older in School Year 2014–2015 (first enrolled in grade 8 in 2010–2011 or earlier)***

These students can meet the graduation assessment requirements in reading, mathematics, and writing through any combination of the three options outlined below as long as requirements are met in each subject.

1. Meet graduation assessment requirements through Graduation-Required Assessments for Diploma (GRAD) in reading, mathematics and written composition, which include:
  - Earning a proficient score. If students were proficient (achieved Meets or Exceeds the Standards) on the grade 10 Reading Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) and/or the grade 11 Mathematics MCA, they have met their graduation assessment requirement for those subjects.
    - This also applies to students who took the high school MCA-Modified<sup>1</sup> or Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS) in place of the MCAs.
  - Earning a passing score on the Written Composition GRAD, Reading GRAD, and/or Mathematics GRAD retests.
    - The Minnesota Alternate Assessment: Writing can be completed for students who need an alternate assessment to meet the requirements for writing.

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<sup>1</sup> 2013–2014 was the last administration year of the MCA-Modified assessments.

- Meeting GRAD alternate routes, which may include the following:
  - Receive an individual passing score (for students on an IEP or 504 plan)
  - Receive an English learner (EL) exemption
  - Pass another state’s accountability assessment that is approved by MDE (reciprocity)
  - Meet mathematics alternate pathway requirements, only for students first enrolled in grade 8 through 2009-2010 (who are likely older than grade 12)

**OR**

2. Students can take the ACT, the WorkKeys, the Compass, or the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) to meet graduation assessment requirements in reading, mathematics, and/or writing.

**OR**

3. A school district may also substitute a score from an alternative, equivalent assessment to satisfy the graduation assessment requirements.

***Grade 11 Student in School Year 2014–2015 (first enrolled in grade 8 in 2011–2012)***

These students will meet graduation assessment requirements through participation in the grade 11 ACT Plus Writing if in attendance during the statewide administration in spring 2015.

However, if a student does not participate in the grade 11 ACT Plus Writing in spring 2015, students can meet the graduation assessment requirements in reading, mathematics, and writing through any combination of the three options outlined above under “Grade 12 Student and Older in School Year 2014–2015.” It is up to an individual student and their families to decide which assessment is most appropriate (ACT Plus Writing statewide administration or one of the other options).

***Grade 10 Student and Younger in School Year 2014–2015 (first enrolled in grade 8 in 2012–2013 and later)***

These students will meet graduation assessment requirements through participation in the series of career and college assessments, which will first be administered in school year 2014–2015:

- Take the grade 8 career and college assessment

**AND**

- Take the grade 10 career and college assessment

**AND**

- Take the grade 11 ACT Plus Writing statewide administration

Districts must provide the opportunity for all students to participate in the Career and College Assessments. However, there may be a few reasons why a student may not participate. These

students will not be denied a diploma because the student did not participate in a Career and College Assessment.

- Students may be unable to participate in an assessment due to a special circumstance (for example, students who move to Minnesota after the administration of a career and college assessment).
- A parent/guardian can decide it is not appropriate for an individual student to participate. Parents/guardians must provide their decision to the school district in writing.

Students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and who are eligible for the Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS) may participate in either the grade 10 Reading MTAS or the grade 11 Mathematics MTAS (or take both assessments) to meet graduation assessment requirements. The MTAS Parent Fact Sheet is available on the MDE website for further information. [View the MTAS Parent Fact Sheet on the MDE website.](#) (Go to Just for Parents > Testing Information.)

Contact your student's school for additional information about meeting graduation assessment requirements.

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*For more information, contact:*

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