

A Parent's Guide to Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS)



COLORADO
Department of Education

What is CMAS?

Parents should know whether or not their children are gaining the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in today's complex world. Our state's new testing system, called Colorado Measures of Academic Success, provides an academic checkup and helps teachers and parents know whether students are on track to be college and career ready.

CMAS are the new state tests in English language arts, math, science and social studies that are given to all Colorado students in grades three-12. The new tests, which replace TCAP, are aligned to the shared expectations for what students across Colorado should know and be able to do. These expectations are known as the Colorado Academic Standards, and they emphasize critical thinking, creativity, problem solving, collaboration and communication as important life skills in the 21st century.

The new tests provide meaningful data for all students. Teachers and families will get detailed reports, helping them better understand each child's mastery of the standards and what additional support or enrichment he or she might need.

In most cases, the CMAS tests are taken online, replacing traditional paper and pencil tests. They feature a variety of interactive questions that are more engaging and aligned with 21st century teaching and learning practices.

What tests does my child take?

CMAS includes the following tests:

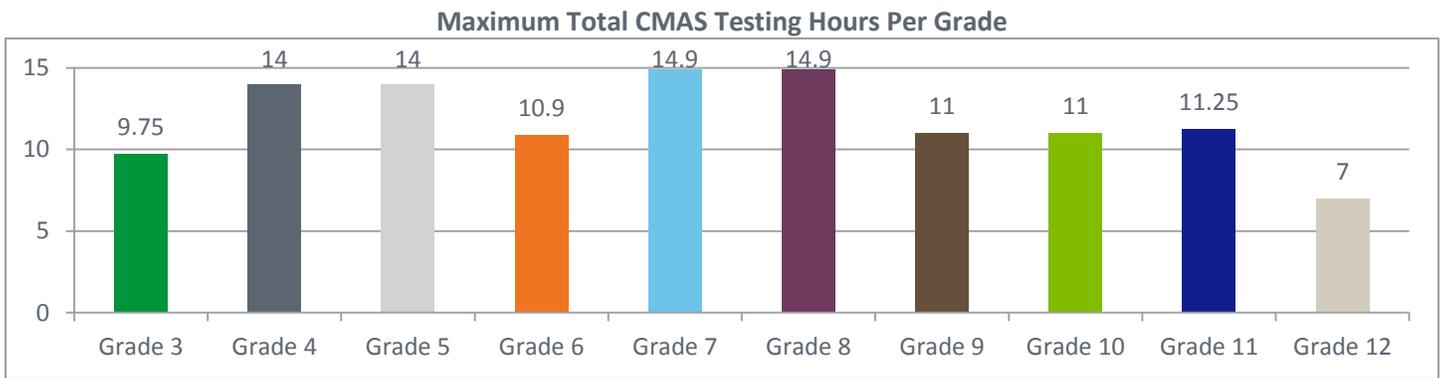
- Grades three through 11 for English language arts
- Grades three through eight and three times in high school for math
- Grades four, seven and 12 for social studies
- Grades five, eight and 12 for science

Colorado 11th-graders also take the ACT.



How much time are students spending taking the test?

Similar to the previous state tests known as TCAP, the CMAS tests are broken down into sections ranging from 60 to 90 minutes. Although the amount of time typical students spend taking the CMAS English language arts, math and science tests is similar to TCAP, the maximum time allowed for the new tests is about 50 percent longer to provide additional time that is often required for students with individualized education plans and English learner plans. Social studies was added to CMAS through feedback on the importance of this content area from practitioners, policymakers and the Colorado State Board of Education.



When are the testing windows?

CMAS is broken into three testing windows for spring. Schools have the entire window to test the necessary grades and subjects, but your child will only test on certain days, not during the entire window. Ask your child's school for his/her specific testing schedule.

The English language arts and math tests, developed by the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for Colleges and Careers (PARCC), are given in two blocks. The first block is called the "performance-based assessment," and it is administered after approximately 75 percent of the school year. This first block contains the writing skills that take longer to score. The second block, called the "end-of year assessment," is administered after 90 percent of the school year. The science and social studies tests have been developed by Colorado and are taken in just one block.

2015 CMAS Testing Window		
March 9 - April 3	April 13 - May 1	April 27 - May 22
English Language Arts and Math <i>Performance Based Assessment</i> GRADES 3-11	Social Studies GRADES 4 & 7	English Language Arts and Math <i>End of Year Component</i> GRADES 3-11
9 10 11 12 13 16 17 18 19 20 23 24 25 26 27 30 31 1 2 3	13 14 15 16 17 20 21 22 23 24 27 28 29 30 1	27 28 29 30 1 4 5 6 7 8 11 12 13 14 15 18 19 20 21 22

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How can I help my child prepare for the tests?

Your child's teacher is bringing the Colorado Academic Standards to life every day through curriculum that is developed by your school. Because the tests are aligned to the standards, your child is preparing for these tests during his or regular instruction. There is no need for additional study. Your child should get a good night's sleep and arrive to school on time the day of the test. You and your child can become familiar with the test by taking an online practice test at www.cde.state.co.us/assessment/CMASPracticeTest.