

# A PARENT'S GUIDE TO CMAS: Colorado Measures of Academic Success

Assessments provide valuable information for students, parents and educators on whether students have mastered grade level and content standards and are on track to graduate prepared for the 21st century. Assessment results provide one measure in a body of evidence of your child's academic progress.



## WHAT IS CMAS?

The *Colorado Measures of Academic Success*, or CMAS, is the Colorado state assessment for language arts, math, science and social studies. CMAS is a *summative* assessment that provides information on how well your child has mastered the key concepts and skills at his or her grade level.

Two of the assessments – language arts and math -- are created by PARCC, the *Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers*, and aligned to the Common Core State Standards for language arts (which includes reading, writing and communicating) and math. The other two assessments – science and social studies – are created by Colorado and aligned to the Colorado Academic Standards.

CMAS English Language Arts and Math tests are given each year to all 3<sup>rd</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> grade students. CMAS Science is given each year to 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students, and CMAS Social Studies is given each year to 1/3 of all 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade students.



## WHEN IS MY CHILD BEING TESTED?

CMAS assessments are administered in one testing window. In spring 2016, schools can begin testing as early as March 14<sup>th</sup> and end on April 29<sup>th</sup>. Your child will only test on certain days based on grade and subject, not during the entire window. Consult your child's school for his/her specific testing schedule.

In most cases, students will take their tests online. These online tests feature a variety of interactive questions that foster increased student engagement with items types such as science simulations and technology-enhanced response items.

Similar to years past, the Colorado Department of Education estimates a typical student's testing time will be less than 1.5% of their total yearly instructional time. Specific to CMAS, students will spend between 8-14 hours taking CMAS tests this year. The exact amount of time is determined by grade and subject.



## WHAT SCORE(S) WILL MY CHILD RECEIVE?

Your child will receive a Student Performance Report with an overall scale score and an overall performance level to indicate your child's overall performance on the assessment in the content area tested. Subscale scores are provided to indicate how well your child performed in each standard. School, district and state averages are included in the report so that you can compare your child's performance to the performance of others.



## HOW WILL THESE SCORES BE USED?

CMAS results provide a picture of student performance to schools, districts, teachers, parents and the community. Results show how students are progressing academically, which is a key component to ensuring students are on track to graduate prepared for college and career. Teachers use CMAS results to enhance instruction in order to meet individual student needs. Schools and districts use CMAS results to make adjustments to instructional programming for the following year.



## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

We encourage you to be involved in your child's education. Please don't hesitate to reach out to your child's teacher for ways you can help your child at home.

We also encourage you to go to <http://standards.dpsk12.org/standards-resources/> to find helpful information, including:

- DPS Parent Guides to Student Learning
- A Parent's Guide to Technology
- Information for English Learners

Experience CMAS: Take a practice test!

- Language Arts and Math: [www.parcc.pearson.com](http://www.parcc.pearson.com) → click the *Test Preparation* tab → select *Practice Tests*
- Science & Social Studies: [www.pearsonaccess.com](http://www.pearsonaccess.com) → click the *ePAT* tab → select the grade/content you wish to see, then click on the one titled *14-15 TN8 SS/Science ePAT*

For more information on assessments and testing accommodations, please visit the Accountability, Research, and Evaluation website: [www.dpsare.com](http://www.dpsare.com)

If you have questions or concerns about assessments, please contact your child's school directly or call the Family & Community Engagement support line at (720) 423-3054.