

# Education Assessment Michigan's System

## What It Is, What It Means, And What It Offers

Revised 03/23/2021

### Expecting More

Getting children ready to take their place in the world is challenging. The knowledge and skills students need for a successful career continually evolve to meet current and future workplace demands. To ensure students can meet these demands, Michigan's State Board of Education has adopted high learning standards that broadly outline what students need to know and be able to do in each subject and grade level to be ready for the next stage of learning.

The standards also guide teachers as they develop classroom curriculum and lesson plans. Today's standards challenge students to:

- ✓ Understand subject matter more deeply
- ✓ Learn how to think critically
- ✓ Apply what they learn to the real world
- ✓ Make learning more relevant in their lives

### Checking for Progress

Once each year, all students in Michigan take a high-quality state summative assessment. Summative assessments measure what students know and are able to do at specific grade levels and in specific subject areas.

All of Michigan's state assessments measure student progress with Michigan's content standards or other career- or college-readiness goals. **The Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress (M-STEP)** is given to students online in grades 3-7 to measure their knowledge of state standards in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. The PSAT 8/9 will measure ELA and mathematics in grade 8. Student knowledge of science and social studies standards are measured by M-STEP in grades 5 and 8.

High school students take the PSAT 8/9 in grade 9 and PSAT 10 in grade 10, to inform schools, students, and parents on what students know in ELA and mathematics, and help prepare students for the SAT college entrance exam given to every high school junior as part of the **Michigan Merit Examination (MME)**. The MME consists of a free SAT with Essay that also measures student knowledge on state ELA and mathematics standards, M-STEP science and social studies components, and a work skills assessment called ACT WorkKeys.

### State Assessments Provide

- ◆ An important snapshot of student achievement at a state, district and building level
- ◆ Valuable information to parents and teachers on their student's academic achievement
- ◆ Important data for schools and districts to evaluate curriculum and programming effectiveness
- ◆ Comparable performance and growth trends over time at the state, district, and building levels

Most students will spend no more than 3-8 hours—less than one percent of instructional time—on state assessments. All other assessments are determined at the school district and building level.

The table on the following page lists the state tests students take at each grade level. Schools have the flexibility to give M-STEP online tests within a six-week time frame and MI-Access assessments over eight weeks. The PSAT, SAT, and ACT WorkKeys assessments are administered according to College Board and ACT guidelines on specific dates. Check with your child's school for exact M-STEP and MME administration dates.

### M-STEP Features

- ◆ Modern test design, with fewer multiple choice questions and more problem solving and critical thinking.
- ◆ Computer adaptive testing (CAT) for English language arts (ELA) and mathematics assessments, which provides a more individualized test experience for students and more precise measurements of student learning.
- ◆ Efficiency: Testing time takes less than 1% of instructional time annually
- ◆ Actionable results—preliminary results available to schools within a few days of testing; final results are available before the start of the next school year for buildings operating under a standard calendar: parent reports are distributed by schools at the start of the school year.

Michigan Assessment Schedule Spring 2021		
Grade Level	Assessment Used and Content Areas Assessed	Testing Window
3, 4, 6, 7	M-STEP Mathematics and English Language Arts (ELA)	April 26 through June 4 extended
5	M-STEP Mathematics, ELA, Science, and Social Studies	April 12 through May 21 extended
8	M-STEP Science and Social Studies	April 12 through May 21 extended
	PSAT 8/9	April 13 only April 14-16 (initial) April 27-May 7 (makeup)
9, 10	PSAT 8/9; PSAT 10	April 13-16 (primary) April 27-May 7 (makeup)
11 MME	M-STEP Science and Social Studies	April 12 through May 21 extended
	SAT with Essay	April 13 only April 27-29 (makeup)
	ACT WorkKeys	April 14 (initial) April 28 (makeup)
3-8, 11	MI-Access Alternate Assessment ELA and Mathematics	April 12 through June 4 Extended
4, 7, 11	MI-Access Science	
5, 8, 11	MI-Access Social Studies (FI only)	
K-12	WIDA for students who are learning the English language	January 27 through April 9 extended

### For Spring 2021 Only

To support safe environments for all students due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have extended M-STEP and MI-Access testing windows.

Additional contingency testing dates have been added for high schools in case they are closed for in-person instruction due to COVID-19 on a scheduled test day.

### Assessments for Special Populations

An alternate assessment called MI-Access is available to students with disabilities whose Individualized

Educational Program (IEP) team has determined that general assessments, even with accommodations, are not appropriate. For more information, see the [MI-Access web page](http://www.michigan.gov/mi-access) ([www.michigan.gov/mi-access](http://www.michigan.gov/mi-access)) under the **Parent/Student Information** section.

The WIDA assesses students who are learning the English language. To find out more about these and other assessments, contact your local school district.

### Why Assess Students?

Student assessment is a hot topic of conversation, with lots of diverse opinions on how, when, how much, with what tests, and for what purpose we assess students. Here are a few important points to keep in mind:

- ◆ State and federal laws require schools to assess student learning every year in specific grade levels and subjects (see table at left).
- ◆ Annual assessments that are the same for all Michigan students give us information on how students are performing, and how well schools and districts are teaching students compared to those in other communities, states, and nations. This helps target supports and resources to students and schools that need them most. It also helps identify areas of success from which others can learn. This information and data are necessary with our goal to be a Top 10 education state.
- ◆ State standardized assessments do not measure everything important about a student, but they do measure how much a student knows in terms of our state's content standards.

### Preparation Can Make a Difference

All students have access to sample test questions and practice tests online.

Students in grades K-8 and 11 can [access sample M-STEP and MI-Access items](https://wbte.drcredirect.com/MI/portals/mi) (<https://wbte.drcredirect.com/MI/portals/mi>) using the Chrome browser.

Students in grades 8-11 can find sample test items at the [College Board website](http://CollegeBoard.com). Choose "Inside the Test" from drop down menu of the test your student will take. .

### Nonpublic and Home-School Students

All nonpublic schools can choose to administer state assessments to their students during the assessment windows identified by the Michigan Department of Education.

Home-schooled students also have the opportunity to take state assessments. To do so, the home-schooled student should contact the school district in which the student resides to make arrangements. The student's scores will be reported individually and not included in district results where they were tested.