

Michigan Grade 8 Assessments FAQs

Published January 10, 2019

From the Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability (OEAA)
Grade 8 Q&A Webinar of November 27, 2018, 11:00 AM–12:00 PM

General Questions Regarding Grade 8 Assessments

Q1 What are the Spring 2019 testing dates?

A1 For all dates regarding testing, see the 2019 [M-STEP List of Important Dates](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Early_Literacy_and_Mathematics_Benchmark_Assessments_List_of_Important_Dates_634787_7.pdf) (www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Early_Literacy_and_Mathematics_Benchmark_Assessments_List_of_Important_Dates_634787_7.pdf) and the 2019 [Grade 8 Testing List of Important Dates](https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Grade_8_List_of_Important_Dates_634813_7.pdf) (https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Grade_8_List_of_Important_Dates_634813_7.pdf).

PSAT 8/9 for grade 8:

- Initial Test Day is April 9, 2019
- Initial Accommodated Testing Window is April 9–23, 2019
- 1st Makeup Testing Window is April 10–16, 2019
- 2nd Makeup Testing Window is April 23–24, 2019

M-STEP for Grade 8 (Social Studies and Science):

- Online Testing Window is April 8–May 3, 2019
- Paper/pencil Science Field Test Initial Test Date is April 17, 2019
- Paper/pencil Social Studies Initial Test Date is April 18, 2019
- Paper/pencil Makeup Testing Window (any content area) April 19–26, 2019

Q2 Where can I find the recording of the November 27, 2018 Q&A session for Grade 8 Assessments?

A2 Due to technical difficulties, a complete recording of the Q&A session is not available at this time. However, the comprehensive 2019 MME/PSAT and Grade 8 Assessment Trainings are posted on the MDE's [PSAT](http://www.michigan.gov/psat) (www.michigan.gov/psat), and [M-STEP](http://www.michigan.gov/mstep) (www.michigan.gov/mstep) webpages under the [Whats New](#) heading.

College Board (for PSAT 8/9 for 8th grade)

Q1 When our students took the M-STEP, we didn't have to apply for accommodations. Why do we have to apply for accommodations through College Board?

A1 The standardized nature of the SAT Suite of Assessments requires an advance accommodation request for the universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations required by students that would have traditionally been used on the M-STEP. In addition, the request in [the] SSD (Services for Students with Disabilities) Online system ensures that the correct testing materials are automatically sent to your school for the students that need them.

Q2 I have heard that state-allowed accommodations are not college-reportable. If I submit accommodations for our 8th graders as state-allowed accommodations, will there be any risk to these students when they take the SAT?

A2 No, state-allowed accommodations are only applicable for one year, so by the time the student takes the SAT, they can take it with College Board-approved accommodations, which do get reported to colleges. Since PSAT 8/9 scores do not get sent to colleges, there is no risk to or impact on the student.

Q3 I have quite a few English Learners at my school. What supports do you offer to EL students?

A3 The College Board provides several supports for EL students, such as:

- Students can use translated test directions without prior approval. Translated test directions for designated languages are in PDF format and must be printed by the school ahead of test day. Translated test directions can be provided orally by an approved translator to the student in languages not available in PDF format.

- Students can use the approved word-for-word bilingual glossaries without prior approval. The approved glossary list (expanded to approximately 100 glossaries) is currently available on the [Michigan College Board website](http://www.collegeboard.org/michigan) (www.collegeboard.org/michigan).
- Students can be provided with 50% extended time in Spring 2019. Although not an accommodation, EL students must be identified in SSD Online starting in late January (January 25–February 19, 2019) in order to receive correct testing materials. Students will be automatically approved, and no documentation will be required.

Q4 For students with accommodations taking the PSAT 8/9 for 8th grade—do they need to start testing on April 9 if they are in school that day or can we start testing any time during the accommodated window?

A4 All accommodated students taking the PSAT 8/9 for Grade 8 can flexibly be scheduled anytime in the accommodated testing window, April 9 through April 23, regardless of the initial test date.

Q5 Can you again review the recommendation to use state-approved accommodations for PSAT 8/9 instead of going through College Board SSD? (This question also appears in the Supports and Accommodations section below.)

A5 For PSAT 8/9 in grade 8, we recommend that you use the state-approved accommodations process. There are a number of reasons:

- Students used to getting designated supports will have consistency between the supports provided for social studies, science, ELA, and math by using state-approved accommodations.
- Second, it's important that the IEP team review the student needs and how those needs are met on an IEP, every time the IEP meeting is held. Then, you would simply re-apply for those accommodations in grade 9.
- You do have the option to use either process. You can go through the state-approved accommodations process, in which you're ensuring the students are getting similar supports [to] what they are used to getting now, or you can use the College Board approval process, in which case you would not have to re-apply in grades 9, 10, and 11. However, if you use

the College Board approval process, it does not relieve the IEP team of their obligation to review a student's needs and how those needs are met each and every time the IEP team meets.

However, regardless of which process is used—the College Board-approved, or the state-allowed accommodation—schools are still required to go into the SSD online system; there's just a different pathway. The pathway for College Board-approved accommodations is open now. These are the ones that stay with the student unless the IEP or 504 changes. The state-allowed accommodation pathway, which is only used on state assessments and is only available for that testing year, will open up the week of January 7th. When you go into SSD online, there'll be a link at the top of your dashboard labeled "Go to State-Allowed Dashboard." You still have to go into SSD online for both—it's just a matter of which part of SSD online you go to.

Q6 Our Test Coordinator has a son taking the PSAT this year. What roles can this person serve for testing this year at our school?

A6 Because the Test Coordinator has a child taking the PSAT 8/9, that Test Coordinator may not have access to test materials before the test day and may not coordinate the PSAT 8/9 or proctor the PSAT 8/9. A backup Test Coordinator would have to coordinate the assessment. The Test Coordinator may serve as a room monitor or hall monitor on the PSAT 8/9 assessment, and the Test Coordinator may coordinate other assessments, such as the PSAT 10 or SAT.

Q7 We plan to test our students in a building located right next to the school, as there is not enough space in the school itself. If the district owns the building and it is on school premises, do we still need to submit an off-site testing request?

A7 Yes—if you are transporting materials, you will have to fill out an off-site testing plan for PSAT. Even though the deadline for off-site testing requests has passed, schools can still submit requests to the College Board for specific emergencies, such as a newly expelled or homebound student. These circumstances will take priority. If College Board can support the request for other reasons (e.g., missed the deadline), they will consider these requests on a case-by-case basis.

Q8 I am the College Board DAT (Institutional Administrator for Assessment Reporting) for our district as well as the administrator level user of the OEAA Secure Site. Should I have access to SSD Online?

A8 No. Access to SSD online is a totally separate process than having access to the K-12 reporting portal, as well as having access to update the EEM. Even if you are listed as the SSD Coordinator in the EEM, that does not automatically grant you access to SSD online. In order to access SSD online, Google the SSD Online Coordinator form; the SSD coordinator will need to fill out that form and send it in to SSD. And then they will email you, within a day or two, an access code to get access to the SSD online. So, even if you have access to these other tools and services, you have to request access to SSD Online specifically.

Grade 8 M-STEP Science Field Test and Social Studies

Q1 Is the science field test required?

A1 Yes, it is required for participation. The report will be an aggregate report at the district level with raw score data, but there is no student-level data reported. A field test is intended to measure the items—not student proficiency—so be sure to use local common assessments when analyzing science proficiency.

Q2 How many parts and test tickets are there to the science field test and the social studies tests?

A2

- Grade 8: there are two parts for the science field test and for social studies; that means two test tickets per assessment for a total of four test tickets for M-STEP.
- Grade 11: each test—science field test and social studies—is one part and has one test ticket; for a total of two test tickets for M-STEP.

Q3 Is a seating chart required for the M-STEP assessment?

A3 No, seating charts are not required for the M-STEP assessment.

Q4 What are the requirements for the testing schedule?

A4 Schools are required to create testing schedules for the M-STEP assessment. The required information includes:

- district name
- building name
- building coordinator’s name
- date of assessment administration
- location of testing session(s) (i.e., room number, classroom, etc.)
- starting and ending time of testing session
- assessment/grade/content being administered for each testing session
- test administrator(s) and proctor(s) for each testing session

Further information, details, and a sample template for testing schedules are available in the Assessment Integrity Guide. Please note that testing schedules must be retained by the district or building for three years.

Q5 Is it acceptable to give both parts of assessment on the same day for students who are not testing with accommodations?

A5 As it relates to the M-STEP, the answer is yes. You would post when you are giving these tests in your testing schedule, and just include the day and times that they took that and what test session they took that test in. But with online testing, you can schedule anytime within the online testing window. That’s the difference between online and paper/pencil—with online M-STEP testing, you can schedule within the window, but for M-STEP paper/pencil testing, we expect you to test on the listed date.

Q6 What supports are available for students who are English Learners?

A6 Students have a number of different options for the M-STEP Science Field Test and Social Studies assessments that might be helpful. It’s up to you to know your students’ skills and abilities so that the best supports are used first and regularly in the classroom before attempting to have students use them on state assessments. Let’s start by having you think about your students’ language abilities.

If you have a student who has exceptionally limited reading and writing ability in English, this student might benefit from having a full oral translation of the M-STEP science and social studies tests. The first question you should be asking yourself is: What

is this student’s academic proficiency in their first language? If a student will be able to better show what they know by hearing the questions and answer options read aloud to them in their native language, then allowing a student to have an in-person human translation of the test is admissible for these two tests.

With this in mind, at the time of the test, educators have the following options:

1. Educators can use a DVD that offers the test in Spanish or one that offers the test in Arabic to students. Students will hear the test questions translated for them but will see the English test questions on the screen. The DVD will help students follow along in their English test booklets.
2. If a student needs a translation of the test into a different language other than Spanish or Arabic, a test administrator can translate the test using the Reader Script. The Reader Script is in English and the test administrator will need to have a high degree of fluency in the student’s language to effectively translate the test.

In both of these scenarios above, students will need to take the paper/pencil form of the assessment.

3. Other options that may be useful for students who do not need a full translation of the test include the use of a bilingual word-to-word dictionary. These are not dictionaries per se as they must not include definitions of words. These are solely books that provide word-to-word translations for students, from English into the student’s first language. This support is best used with students who have an intermediate or higher level of English proficiency. The use of these books is extremely time consuming for students, so a student with very low English proficiency will find its use very, very tedious. Any student needing this support type may need additional time to complete assignments and tests.

OEAA Secure Site

Q1 When new students enroll, and our pupil accounting person submits them in the Michigan Student Data System, will they automatically be pre-identified on the Secure Site or do I have to do something?

A1 Students [who] are submitted in the Michigan Student Data System by 5:00 PM on January 3 will be included in the initial pre-identification of students

done by OEAA (Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability). This is a one-time pull of students from the Michigan Student Data System (MSDS), and schools will be required to pre-identify any additional students directly on the Secure Site.

Q2 When/how/where do we submit pre-ID student data for barcode labels?

A2

- For M-STEP and PSAT 8/9 for Grade 8, the OEAA will pre-identify students in grades 3–11 and the required grade 12 students into the OEAA Secure Site—using the Fall 2018 MSDS General Collection (fall count day data) and student record maintenance (SRM) files submitted through January 3, 2019 from the Michigan Student Data System (MSDS)—to the M-STEP and PSAT 8/9. Schools will have access to the Pre-ID Student Report starting on January 11, 2019 and will be responsible for pre-identifying any additional students after January 3 through the end of testing.
- Directions can be found on the [OEAA Secure Site Training page](http://www.michigan.gov/securesitetraining) (www.michigan.gov/securesitetraining) under the Pre-Identification of Students section.

Q3 What do I do if I don’t have a pre-ID barcode label for a particular student?

A3 All paper/pencil answer documents must have an affixed barcode label. Schools will need to continue to pre-identify students on the OEAA Secure Site through the end of testing. Once a student is pre-identified on the OEAA Secure Site, a barcode label can be printed from the Barcode Label page on the OEAA Secure Site. This can be used to re-print labels that have been damaged, lost, or for students for whom schools did not receive a barcode label from the testing vendor for any reason. Please make sure to always check the barcode label to ensure you are putting it on the correct answer document for both the student and the correct assessment. A barcode label printed for an assessment cannot be placed on an answer document for a different assessment. The assessment (e.g., SAT, M-STEP, WorkKeys, etc.) will be printed on the barcode label. Directions can be found on the [OEAA Secure Site Training page](http://www.michigan.gov/securesitetraining) (www.michigan.gov/securesitetraining) under the Pre-Identification of Students section.

Q4 When/how/where do we order test materials?

A4

Initial Material Orders:

- For the M-STEP and PSAT 8/9, the standard materials will be shipped in the initial order based on the number of students [who] are pre-identified for PSAT 8/9 on the OEAA Secure Site at 5:00 PM, on February 13.
- If a student needs an accommodation for PSAT 8/9, it must be submitted through College Board's SSD system. Accommodated materials for M-STEP can be ordered from the Initial Material Order page of the OEAA Secure Site. Pre-identification and initial material orders on the OEAA Secure Site will be [open] from January 7 to February 13, 2019 at 5:00 PM. Don't forget to check the shipping address on the Initial Material order page during this time.

Additional Material Orders:

- If additional materials are needed for the initial day of testing for the M-STEP, schools will have the opportunity to place an additional material order for standard and accommodation versions of the test April 2–23, 2019 (closes at noon). This will be done on the Additional Material Order page of the OEAA Secure Site.
- The window for PSAT 8/9 for Grade 8 additional material orders is March 20–28, 2019

Makeup Material Orders:

- Coordinators should securely hold extra PSAT 8/9 test materials, on site, for use during the PSAT makeup testing dates. Additional makeup materials will be available to order through College Board April 10 and 11, 2019. It's a short window, so mark your calendars. Watch for an email on April 10 from College Board with instructions. If additional materials are needed, the makeup survey can be utilized to obtain more materials.
- Directions for the Initial and Additional Material Orders page of the OEAA Secure Site can be found on the [OEAA Secure Site Training page](http://www.michigan.gov/securesitetraining) (www.michigan.gov/securesitetraining) under the Material Order section.

Q5 If I have a student that is taking the M-STEP on paper and not online, how do I make sure that I get test materials for that student?

A5 Once a student is pre-identified on the Secure Site for M-STEP testing, the student must also be changed from online to paper/pencil in the

student's demographic screen for M-STEP or on the Mass Update Assessments page of the Secure Site. If this is done by 5:00 PM on February 13, the materials will automatically be ordered based on the pre-identification of the student. If this is done after February 13, then the test will need to be ordered by the school during the Additional Material Order window.

Supports and Accommodations (for M-STEP Science and Social Studies)

Q1 I have two visually impaired 8th graders that are testing M-STEP science and social studies as paper/pencil. Both tests have two parts, but the test days are April 17 for science field test and April 18 for social studies. Can we or should we give both parts of those tests in one day or should we give the second parts on a makeup day?

A1 Both tests can be given in one day, but it is acceptable (and recommended) to give the test spread over two days (e.g., an initial test day and a makeup testing day, or within the accommodated window), as long as you're administering the tests within the designated time frame we've provided. In fact, for students [who] are visually impaired, we would recommend giving those students as much time as possible because it's likely that they're going to need it, given whatever format of the test they're going to be taking. It is the format of the test that is really the question here. For paper/pencil tests, we do want them to take the test on the day that's listed so they would take both parts on that day. However, if they have accommodations or need extended time, certainly doing it in the makeup session is acceptable.

Q2 Which students can use text-to-speech?

A2 For M-STEP science and social studies, text-to-speech is considered [a] Designated Support. This means that the students who can use text-to-speech are only those students who have the regular use of a similar support in the classroom. The type of text-to-speech differs between and among assessments, but for M-STEP science and social studies, this is the rule. This support type should not be turned on for all students in a school. We provide guidance documents intended to help educators make decisions about which students this designated support might be appropriate for. The guidance is available on the M-STEP website and will be available in this spring's **Supports and Accommodations Table** and **Guidance** document.

Q3 Can you again review the recommendation to use state-approved accommodations for PSAT 8/9 instead of going through College Board SSD? (This FAQ was also included in the College Board section of this FAQ document.)

A3 For PSAT 8/9 in grade 8, we recommend that you use the state-approved accommodations process. There are a number of reasons for [this]:

- One is that, for students who are used to getting some designated supports, perhaps, or if you want to have consistency between social studies and science and ELA and math, it is recommended that you use that process because it is more likely to provide that consistency.
- Second, it's important that the IEP team review the student needs and how those needs are met on an IEP, every time the IEP meeting is held. Then, you would simply re-apply for those accommodations in Grade 9.
- You do have the option to use either process. You can go through the state-approved accommodations process, in which you're

ensuring the students are getting similar supports [to] what they are used to getting now, or you can use the College Board approval process, in which case you would not have to re-apply in grades 9, 10, and 11. However, if you use the College Board approval process, it does not relieve the IEP team of their obligation to review a student's needs and how those needs are met each and every time the IEP team meets.

However, regardless of which process is used—the College Board-approved, or the state-allowed accommodation—schools are still required to go into the SSD online system—there's just a different pathway. The pathway for College Board-approved accommodations is open now. These are the ones that stay with the student unless the IEP or 504 changes. The state-allowed accommodation pathway, which is only used on state assessments and is only available for that testing year, will open up the week of January 7th. When you go into SSD online, there'll be a link at the top of your dashboard labeled "Go to State-Allowed Dashboard." You still have to go into SSD online for both—it's just a matter of which part of SSD online you go to.