



FAQ: Coronavirus and Testing

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

In response to the coronavirus pandemic that has led to school closures and restrictions on public gatherings, [on March 20 the U.S. Department of Education \(USDE\) announced that it will allow states to request a waiver from annual mandated standardized tests. It has also been announced that previously scheduled SAT, AP, and ACT tests will be canceled or rescheduled. See answers below to some frequently asked questions on testing and what's next.](#)

Is Maryland applying for a testing waiver from USDE?

Yes. On March 24, the State Board of Education approved a [waiver letter](#) from Superintendent Salmon. MSEA supports this application and we expect USDE to respond soon. If this waiver is accepted by USDE, it means that neither the [Maryland Integrated Science Assessment \(MISA\)](#) nor MCAP (the replacement for PARCC) would be given this year, in what would have been the first year of MCAP's administration.

If state assessments are not given, what does that mean for school ratings?

It's not immediately clear. The waiver application states: "Any school that is identified for comprehensive or targeted support and improvement or additional

targeted support and improvement in the 2019-2020 school year will maintain that identification status in the 2020-2021 school year and continue to receive supports and interventions consistent with the school's support and improvement plan in the 2020- 2021 school year." USDE's documentation notes that "any state that receives a one-year waiver may also receive a waiver from the requirement that this testing data be used in the statewide accountability system due to the national emergency."

These are unprecedented times, and we need to make sure that schools are not treated punitively when they have no chance to demonstrate improvement in student achievement, implement improvement strategies, or even conduct normal stakeholder meetings. Numerous other data points required in the school accountability system—such as chronic absenteeism and the school climate survey—would also not be able to be captured with fidelity during a long-term closure. We will be monitoring this situation closely to make sure that schools, educators, and students are treated fairly and with consideration of these unique circumstances.

What is happening with Advanced Placement (AP) tests?

The College Board, which administers the AP, SAT, and ACT programs, is developing an online AP assessment alternative. The [College Board made the decision](#)

after surveying 18,000 AP students to determine that there is sufficient interest to warrant arranging for alternative tests. For each AP subject, there will be two testing dates.

The Board is also supporting AP students by offering [free remote learning resources](#) and is aware that the lack of access to digital technology could prevent some low-income and rural students from participating. The Board is working with partners so that these students have the tools and connectivity they need to review AP content online and take the exam. If students need mobile tools or connectivity, they can [reach out to AP directly](#).

What about the ACT?

[ACT has rescheduled](#) its April 4 national test date to June 13 across the U.S. All students registered for the April 4 test date will receive an email from ACT informing them of the postponement and instructions for free rescheduling to June 13 or a future national test date. [Click here to learn more.](#)

What about the SAT?

SAT tests that were scheduled from March through May are canceled or postponed. The College Board is canceling the May 2 SAT and SAT Subject Test administration. Makeup exams for the March 14 administration (scheduled for March 28) are also canceled. The March 25 SAT School Day administration is postponed. Students who already registered for

May whose March test centers were closed or who do not receive March scores because of any irregularities will receive refunds. The College Board has not yet canceled the June 6 SAT and SAT Subject Test administration as of the publication of this FAQ.

The College Board is working with local partners and will soon share further information about weekday school-based SAT, PSAT 10, and PSAT 8/9 administrations scheduled for this spring.

The College Board will also provide future additional SAT testing opportunities for students as soon as possible in place of canceled administrations. They have said that they will “be as flexible as possible” to give students the best chance to show their skills and stay on the path to college. The College Board will share additional information and details directly with registered students and test centers, and will post updates on the [College Board website](#).

What will the impact be on tests required for graduation, Bridge projects, the Government HSA, and tests that students in CTE programs need to take to achieve industry certifications?

It's unclear at this time. We are seeking further clarification on these and other assessments from MSDE and will provide updates as soon as we have them.

Will this affect the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment?

It hasn't yet. It depends on whether closures extend through the summer, when some school systems begin to administer the KRA. One could argue that the long-term disruption of pre-k will make the KRA results less useful for their stated purpose of assessing the quality of different pre-k options.

