

MARYLAND'S DIFFERENCES AMONG ASSESSMENTS CHART FOR STUDENTS RECEIVING SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

The following table illustrates the differences between the MSA, HSA, Mod-MSA, Mod-HSA, and the Alt-MSA

	MSA/HSA	Mod-MSA/Mod-HSA	Alt-MSA
ASSESSMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On course level content standards (end-of-course HSAs) and grade level content (MSAs). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Built on course level content standards (end-of-course HSAs) and grade level content standards (MSAs), that incorporates variation in test delivery to meet the specific learning characteristics of the student. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May include reduced coverage and/or simplification of grade-level content, based on "extended" standards. Portfolio format permits variation/customization of test content for individual student.
ELIGIBLE STUDENT POPULATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student in the general education curriculum, 504 plan, and receiving special education services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student receiving special education services and meets ALL Mod-MSA or Mod-HSA eligibility criteria. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grade 3-8 and grade 10 Student receiving special education services and meets ALL Alt-MSA eligibility criteria.
STATE GUIDELINES DEFINE WHO IS ELIGIBLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student with a disability who can take the regular assessment with accommodations. IEP Team makes the decision regarding the appropriate assessment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student whose disability has precluded him/her from achieving proficiency, as demonstrated by objective evidence of the student's performance and whose progress is such that, even if significant growth occurs, the student's IEP Team is reasonably certain that the student will not achieve grade-level proficiency within the year covered by the IEP. IEP Team makes the decision regarding the appropriate assessment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student with the most significant cognitive disability. IEP Team makes the decision regarding the appropriate assessment.
ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A grade-level academic achievement standard defines a level of "proficient" performance equivalent to grade-level achievement on the State's regular assessment. Achievement standards include 3 levels of performance (basic, proficient and advanced) cut scores that distinguish one level from another, and descriptors of the content-based competencies associated with each level. Assessment is defined grade-by-grade or (as in the case of the HSA), content-by-content, as the standards are based on end-of-course content acquisition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A modified academic achievement standard is aligned to grade-level content standards for the grade/course in which a student is enrolled and is challenging for an eligible student, but may be less difficult than regular grade-level/course achievement standards. Achievement standards include 3 levels of performance (basic, proficient and advanced); cut scores that distinguish one level from another, and descriptors of the content-based competencies associated with each level. Assessments are defined grade-by-grade or (as in the case of the HSA), content-by-content, as the standards are based on end-of-course content acquisition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An alternative academic achievement standard is an expectation of performance that differs in complexity from a grade-level achievement standard, usually based on a very limited sample of content that is linked to but does not fully represent grade-level content. Achievement standards include 3 levels of performance (basic, proficient and advanced); cut scores that distinguish one level from another, and descriptors of the content-based competencies associated with each level. Although the alternate academic achievement standards were set grade-by-grade, the standards are currently the same for each grade, 3 – 8 and 10 for reading and mathematics.

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	MSA/HSA	Mod-MSA/Mod-HSA	ALT-MSA
CONTENT STANDARDS ON WHICH THE TEST IS BASED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-level content (end-of-course HSAs) and grade-level content (MSAs). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On on-level content (end-of-course Mod-HSAs) and grade-level content (Mod-MSAs). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Extended" standards include substantially simplified content.
IEP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must include annual measurable IEP goals and benchmarks or short-term objectives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must include annual measurable IEP goals and benchmarks or short-term objectives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must include annual measurable IEP goals and benchmarks or short-term objectives.
ACCOMMODATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All students with disabilities – regardless of the test they take – are entitled to the same accommodations on assessments as are provided during daily instruction and prescribed in their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All students with disabilities – regardless of the test they take – are entitled to the same accommodations on assessments as are provided during daily instruction and prescribed in their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All students with disabilities – regardless of the test they take – are entitled to the same accommodations on assessments as are provided during daily instruction and prescribed in their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).
FORMAT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selected responses (multiple choice)/brief constructed responses/extended constructive responses. Beginning May 2009, the HSA will only have selected responses. No BCRs and no ECRs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only selected responses (multiple choices). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portfolio of evidence that demonstrates the student's attainment of targeted mastery objectives in Reading, Math, and Science.
GRADUATION REQUIREMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student taking the MSAs or HSAs is pursuing the Maryland High School Diploma. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student taking the Mod-MSA or Mod-HSA is pursuing the Maryland High School Diploma. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student taking the Alt-MSA is pursuing the Maryland Certificate of Completion.

Maryland State Department of Education
Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services and the Division of Accountability and Assessment