

Spring 2021 Assessment Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

1. When are the state mandated TCAP assessments administered this spring?

The Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) assessments, also known as TNReady, will be administered between April 21 and May 14 to students in grades 3 through 8 and in selected high school courses. The test in grades 3 through 8 covers English/Language Arts (ELA), Math, Science and Social Studies. High school end-of-course exams are administered for English I and II; Integrated I, II and III; Algebra I and II; Geometry; Biology; and U.S. History.

All TCAP assessments this year, as required by the State of Tennessee, are paper and pencil tests that must be administered within the school building. Each school will schedule specific test dates for each subject and will communicate these dates to families. The district's 2020-21 assessment calendar is linked below.

https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57752cbcd1758e541bdeef6b/t/605a09fc1e64660fd4a13606/1616513533258/MNPS+Assessment+Dates+2020-21+%2803-05-21%29_with+Page+2.pdf

2. Are students in virtual instruction expected to return to school buildings for TCAP testing?

The expectation of the Tennessee Department of Education is that all students in the tested grade levels and subjects will attempt the TCAP tests. MNPS is committed to providing a safe and socially distanced test setting for all students participating in the testing process. Virtual students will only need to attend on the days that they are schedule to test during the window. Once daily testing is complete you may elect to pick your student up, however, if they ride the bus, they will stay all day. Your student's school will send testing schedules home prior to April 9th with details.

3. Are students or families allowed to opt out of TCAP assessments?

No, the state does not allow students to opt out of testing and school districts are not authorized to adopt policies that allow these actions. Federal and Tennessee state law requires participation in state assessments for students in the tested grade levels and subjects. School staff are required to provide the assessment to all eligible students on the days of the scheduled tests.

A student in the tested grade or subject who is in school on the test date but does not attempt any part of the test is coded as a "refusal" on the TCAP answer sheet. Scores are not generated for that student. Eligible students who are not in the school building on the test date are coded on the answer sheet as "absent." These students would not be marked as absent for attendance purposes, however, if they are actively involved in virtual instruction on the day of the test.

Below is a link to the most recent memo from the Tennessee Department of Education addressing this issue.

<https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/testing/October%202020%20Assessment%20Opt%20Out%20Memo.pdf>

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4. Will transportation and/or meals be provided for students in virtual instruction on days of TCAP testing?

Normal bus routes will be provided on days of testing to all students who are eligible for yellow school bus transportation outside of the Parent Responsibility Zone (PRZ). This does not include choice schools. Breakfast/lunch will be served to all students attending in person on testing days and grab/go service will be available for students who remain virtual on those days.

5. Will TCAP scores be factored into student course grades this year?

No, Metro Nashville Public Schools has chosen to not include TCAP scores into grade calculations for the 2020-21 school year.

6. What other district assessments are students required to take before the end of the school year?

The Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment will be administered May 3 through May 14 to students in grades kindergarten through nine. This assessment is part of the universal screening process to assist teachers in measuring student academic progress and identifying individual needs in reading and math. The MAP is a computer adaptive test that can be administered online to students whether they are receiving instruction in person or virtually.

Assessments will be offered in May for certain advanced academic courses that provide students the opportunity to earn postsecondary credit or industry certifications while enrolled in high school. These include Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, Cambridge International, Industry Certification and Dual Credit exams.

7. What are the benefits to students of taking TCAP and/or MAP assessments?

As stated in the state's memo linked above, the TCAP assessments are aligned with the state's academic standards in the tested subjects. MAP assessments are also aligned to state standards in English/Language Arts (ELA) and Math. These tests help inform educators and families regarding the student's mastery of those standards. Given the disruption in schooling that has occurred in the past year, this information can be helpful in identifying any potential gaps in student learning that need to be addressed.

While the criteria for academic magnet school eligibility are reviewed annually, TCAP test scores have historically been factored into student eligibility for families pursuing that option. Students typically meet the academic magnet test score requirement with scores of *On Track* or *Mastered* for ELA and Math. The spring MAP scores may also be a consideration for academic magnet eligibility.