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State Superintendent of Schools

TO: State Board of Education
FROM: Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.
DATE: June 22, 2021
SUBJECT: Early Fall Assessment Reporting

PURPOSE:

This presentation will provide information about a request for a waiver of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* requirement to report three achievement levels for the assessment results of the spring 2021/early fall 2021 MCAP assessments. MSDE will be requesting permission to report only two levels for the assessment results.

BACKGROUND/HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE:

On February 22, 2021, the U.S. Department of Education sent guidance to states for flexibility in the administration of the federally mandated state assessments for mathematics, English language arts (ELA), and science. As a result of this guidance, on March 4, 2021, the Maryland State Board of Education approved the plan to administer shortened forms of the ELA and mathematics assessments in the early fall of 2021.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Early Fall Assessments will be about one-half the length of the full assessment. Due to the shortened length, the number of test items available to measure student performance is significantly diminished. Therefore, to improve the accuracy and reliability of the levels reported, MSDE is proposing to report two levels of achievement.

ACTION:

Request State Board approval to share with Superintendents and the public for comment the intention to request a waiver from U.S. Department of Education to report two achievement levels.

ATTACHMENTS: Attachment I - Early Fall Assessment Reporting, Power Point

U.S. Department of Education Waiver Request Early Fall Assessment Reporting

State Board Meeting
June 22, 2021



Early Fall Assessments

- On February 22, 2021, the U.S. Department of Education sent guidance to states for flexibility in administration of the federally mandated state assessments for mathematics, English language arts (ELA), and science*.
- As a result of this guidance, on March 4, 2021, the Maryland State Board of Education approved the plan to administer ELA and mathematics assessments, in the early fall 2021 in shortened form.

[*https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-education-releases-guidance-states-assessing-student-learning-during-pandemic](https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-education-releases-guidance-states-assessing-student-learning-during-pandemic)

Early Fall Assessments

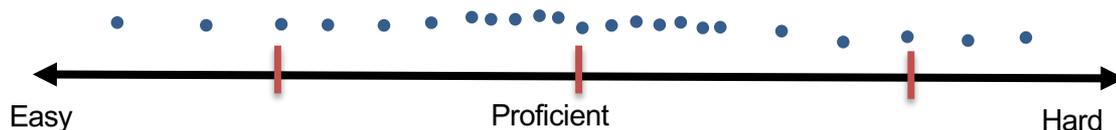
- The Early Fall Assessments will be about one-half the length of the full assessment.
- Due to this shortened length, the number of test items available to measure student performance is significantly diminished.
- Therefore, to improve the accuracy and reliability of the levels reported, MSDE is proposing to report two levels of achievement.
- Student results will show if the student achieved proficiency for the content assessed.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act Requirements

The State's academic achievement standards and, as applicable, alternate academic achievement standards, include: (1) not less than 3 levels of achievement, with two for high achievement and a third for lower achievement; (2) descriptions of the competencies associated with each achievement level; and (3) achievement scores that differentiate among the achievement levels. <https://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/saa/assessmentpeerreview.pdf>

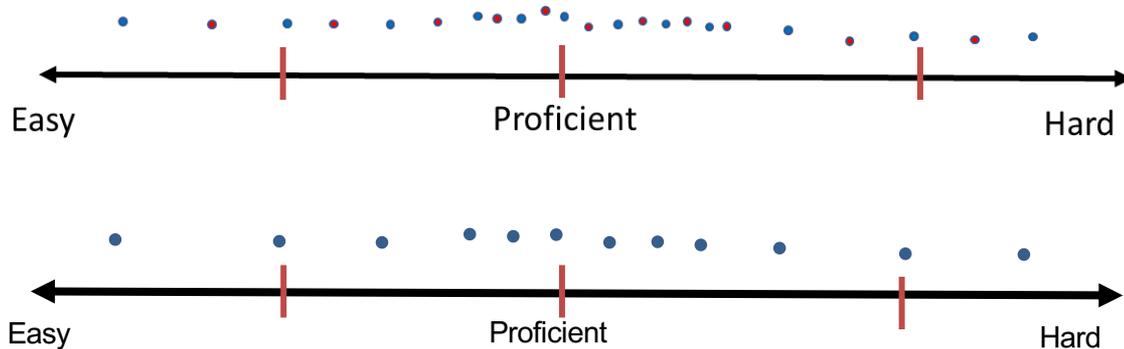
2 Verses 3 Reporting Levels

On a fixed form test, items must cover the full range of performance levels to allow for measurement of all students. Items are spread along the whole spectrum from easy to hard with a greater number of items around the cut scores (represented by the orange marks), particularly the **proficient cut**.



Shortening the Assessment

When we shorten the assessment and remove half of the items, our ability to measure the proficient cut with some reliability is still good; however, our ability to measure the cuts above and below becomes less reliable and has a much greater margin of error.

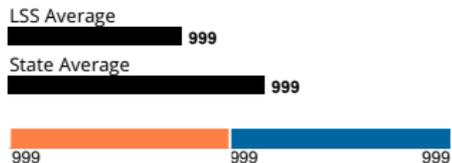
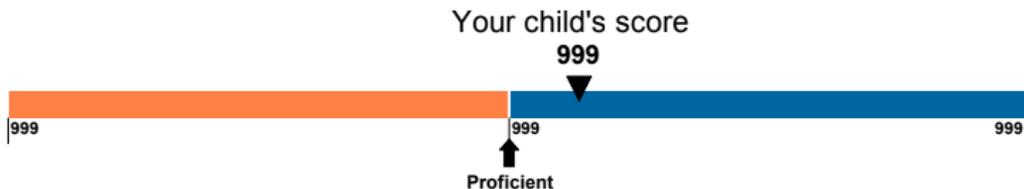


Sample Individual Student Report

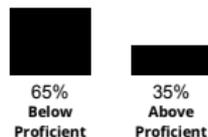
How Did FIRSTNAME Perform Overall?

Level of Proficiency
Above Proficient

 Above Proficient
 Below Proficient



How Students in Maryland Performed



The 2021 Spring assessment measures the ELA skills and content from the grade your student completed during the 2020-2021 school year. The assessments measure how well students understood grade level material in English language arts/literacy. Students who demonstrate proficiency are on track for the 2021-2022 school year.

Recommendation

Recommend that the MSDE request a waiver of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* requirement in order to report two achievement levels for the assessment results of the spring 2021/early fall 2021 MCAP English language arts and mathematics assessments.

Next Steps

With State Board approval, share the intention to request a waiver with Superintendents and the public for comment.

Return to the State Board on July 27, 2021, requesting final approval to submit the waiver request to the U.S. Department of Education.