

Maryland Classroom

A Publication from the Maryland State Department of Education

Getting Maryland's HOUSSE in Order

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) requires that all new teachers¹ of core academic subjects in Title I schools meet the Act's definition of a "highly qualified" teacher now and that all others² meet the definition by the end of the 2005–06 school year (see Table 1).

The State Board of Education began helping teachers comply with the "highly qualified" requirement in July 2003, when it permitted certified teachers to add an endorsement to their certificates by passing a Praxis II test in the area they teach. That same month, the Board also adopted four new Praxis II tests (English, math, science, and social studies) for teachers working in middle schools.

But, according to NCLB, passing a state exam isn't the only way experienced teachers may prove they're "highly qualified." The legislation allows veteran teachers to demonstrate competence through a High, Objective, Uniform State Standard of Evaluation (HOUSSE).

Continued on page 4

Adding an Endorsement to Your Certificate

Regulatory changes that went into effect July 1, 2003, can make becoming "highly qualified" quicker and cheaper. Teachers can now add an endorsement to an existing professional certificate by meeting the qualifying score on the appropriate PRAXIS II test. Exceptions to this rule follow:

- To add an elementary endorsement to an early childhood certificate, teachers must take PRAXIS II content and pedagogy tests.
- To add an early childhood endorsement to an elementary certificate, teachers must take the PRAXIS II pedagogy test only.

Effective July 1, 2004, certification in ESOL will require passing a PRAXIS II content test. ■

NCLB's "Highly Qualified" Teacher

Table 1

For all teachers teaching any core academic subject¹ (including early childhood and elementary)

- Hold at least a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college or university
- Hold a valid SPC, APC, or Resident Teacher Certificate
- Satisfy the applicable requirements below

NEW² early childhood and elementary teachers

Pass a state test assessing subject knowledge and teaching skill in reading, writing, math, and other areas of the basic early childhood or elementary school curriculum.

NEW² middle, secondary, and preK-12 teachers (art and music)

- Pass the applicable state content test in each core academic subject you teach, OR
- Complete an academic major, coursework equivalent to a major,³ graduate degree, or advanced certification⁴ in each core academic subject you teach.

Early childhood, elementary, middle, secondary, and preK-12 (art and music) teachers NOT NEW to teaching

- Meet the applicable standards listed for teachers NEW to the profession, OR
- Use the High, Objective, Uniform State Standard of Evaluation (HOUSSE) to demonstrate competency in each core academic subject you teach.

¹ A "core academic subject" is English, reading or language arts, math, science, foreign languages, civics and government,

economics, arts (art, dance, music, and theater), history, or geography. Special education and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) are not core academic subjects. However, special education and ESOL teachers must be "highly qualified" in every core academic subject for which they plan and conduct instruction and assess student performance.

² A "new teacher" is a teacher hired after the first day of Maryland's 2002–03 school year.

³ "Coursework equivalent to a major" is 30 credit hours from a regionally accredited college or university with 50% of the coursework taken at the upper-division level.

⁴ "Advanced certification" is certification issued by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards or an Advanced Professional Certificate issued by MSDE.

HSA and a High School Diploma

In February, the State Board of Education approved the publication of draft high school graduation requirements—new requirements that would tie students' performance on the High School Assessments (HSA) to a Maryland High School Diploma. (Students currently have to take—but not pass—the HSA to graduate.)

To be eligible for a Diploma under the new proposal, students would have to: 1) pass all four HSA or approved substitute tests;¹ or 2) earn an as-yet-undetermined minimum score on each of the four tests—but not necessarily pass all four—and earn an overall combined score. MSDE is also convening a task force to examine how students who have difficulty performing in a traditional test setting might demonstrate their knowledge of HSA-tested content. The task force is scheduled to recommend a comparable assessment—and which students are eligible to take it—by September 2007.

The decision to publish the draft regulations in *The Maryland Register* initiated a public comment period that ends with a hearing on the proposal at the State Board's May meeting. If the written and oral comments received require significant changes to the proposed regulations, the regulations will be withdrawn, rewritten, resubmitted to the Board, and republished, initiating another four months of public comment. If the Board decides no substantial changes are necessary, the proposal will go for a final Board vote in June.

If the regulations are approved, they would first affect the graduating class of 2009 (students entering high school in fall 2005).² Board members agreed to review student performance on the assessments each year leading up to 2009 to determine if students are making progress on the tests and if modifications to the regulations are necessary.

This single High School Diploma option differs significantly from a proposal submitted to the State Board in December 2003, which offered students different kinds of diplomas based on their HSA performance and special services received.³ Community and professional groups contacted for feedback on the proposal indicated they did not support offering students different diplomas based on their HSA performance and suggested the current cumulative-score path instead.

Maryland began assessing the feasibility of instituting high school exit exams in 1993 and adopted the course content upon which the exams are based (the Core Learning Goals) in 1996. If the State Board approves the Diploma proposal for the class of 2009, 16 years will have passed between the state's initial study of the HSA program and the first graduating class affected by it. ■

¹ To guarantee test security and rigor, as well as an absence of bias, substitute tests will be national tests with established standards, such as SAT II or Advanced Placement exams. MSDE and the Psychometric Council will ensure content and passing-score alignment between the approved substitute tests and the HSA.

² If the Board approves the graduation requirements, seventh- and eighth-graders taking the algebra/data analysis HSA this year will have to pass the test to graduate.

³ Several newspaper articles published after the December meeting erroneously reported that the State Board had voted to enact the preliminary proposal for differentiated diplomas. In fact, regulations based on the preliminary proposal were never drafted and a vote was never scheduled.

Maryland High School Diploma

According to the proposed high school completion policy, the Maryland High School Diploma would be available to students who complete state and local credit and program requirements for graduation and who fulfill one of the options below.

Passing Score Option

Students take and pass all four HSA (English I, algebra/data analysis, government, and biology). Students may substitute passing scores on one or more MSDE-approved tests (e.g., Advanced Placement, SAT II, International Baccalaureate) for a passing score on an HSA. (A committee would be established to identify acceptable substitute tests and passing scores.)

Combined-Score Option

Students take all four HSA, earn a minimum score on each test, and earn an overall combined score. The minimum score for each HSA would be established by MSDE. The combined score would equal the sum of the four HSA passing scores set by the State Board last August: 412 [algebra/data analysis] + 407 [English I] + 394 [government] + 400 [biology] = 1613 [combined score]. The combined-score option permits students who score very well on some tests to compensate for lower scores on other tests.

Comparable Assessment Option

A number of stakeholders who commented on the proposed graduation requirements voiced concern that students with special needs may have difficulty demonstrating their knowledge in a traditional test setting. Therefore, Dr. Grasmick is appointing a task

Continued on page 3

Changes to Maryland's NCLB Consolidated Plan

Shortly after the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) was signed in January 2002, states were required to draft plans to comply with the federal legislation. The plans had to address, in detail, how Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) would be measured and how schools not making AYP would be identified. Maryland's plan, approved in April 2003, was the seventh state accountability plan to be accepted by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE).

USDE recently announced greater flexibility in selected NCLB guidelines and gave states an April 1 deadline for submitting corresponding amendments to their plans. MSDE has proposed several changes that should help schools meet Maryland's tough annual improvement benchmarks. The changes apply to five areas of accountability: 1) calculating AYP for English language learners; 2) calculating geometry AYP; 3) calculating graduation-rate AYP; 4) establishing participation limits for alternative assessments; and 5) setting minimum group sizes. The amendments should be approved before 2003–04 AYP calculations are made and should, therefore, apply to this school year.

English language learners new to the U.S.

In February, USDE drafted new policies that exempt some English language learners from Maryland School Assessment (MSA) participation and accountability. The revised guidelines give states greater flexibility in determining how students new to the U.S. will be included in state tests and AYP calculations.

Current Policy

English language learners enrolled for the first time in a U.S. school on or before September 30 must take the reading and math MSAs, and their scores are included in AYP calculations. English language learners enrolled after September 30 must take the reading and math MSAs, but their scores are *not* included in AYP calculations. They are, however, included in state and school system report cards.

Proposed Policy

English language learners first enrolled in a U.S. school after September 30 would fulfill the math-test requirement by taking the math MSA (with appropriate accommodations) and would fulfill the reading-test requirement by taking the IDEA Proficiency Test (IPT), Maryland's English fluency test. However, neither test score would count toward AYP.

An English language learner first enrolled in a U.S. school after MSA testing in March of one school year but before September 30 of the following school year would take the math MSA and *either* the reading MSA or the IPT. The school would decide whether to count the student's math score toward AYP.¹ If the school administered the reading MSA, the student's reading score *would* count toward AYP; if the school administered the IPT, the student's score *would not* count. Students taking the reading and math MSAs would be eligible to receive all appropriate accommodations as indicated in their English language learner (ELL) plans.

English language learners new to the U.S.

	Current Policy		Proposed Policy	
	Enrolled after September 30	Enrolled after MSA testing but before Sept. 30	Enrolled after September 30	Enrolled after MSA testing but before Sept. 30
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student takes reading MSA Score doesn't count toward AYP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student takes reading MSA Score counts toward AYP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student takes IPT* Score doesn't count toward AYP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School decides whether student takes MSA or IPT If student takes MSA, score counts toward AYP If student takes IPT, score doesn't count toward AYP.
Math	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student takes math MSA Score doesn't count toward AYP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student takes math MSA Score counts toward AYP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student takes math MSA Score doesn't count toward AYP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student takes math MSA School decides whether score counts toward AYP

*IDEA Proficiency Test

English language learners exited from LEP subgroup

USDE has also introduced more flexible procedures governing how schools, systems, and states will be held accountable for the performance of students newly exited from the limited English proficient (LEP) subgroup.

Current Policy

When a student stops receiving ELL services, he or she exits the LEP subgroup, and his or her MSA scores are factored into AYP calculations for the general school population. However, for two years following the cessation of ELL services, MSDE tracks the MSA performance of these students—now considered re-designated LEP (R-LEP)—to gauge their improvement.

Proposed Policy

MSDE would expand the "AYP definition" of English language learners to include R-LEP students. That means students whose ELL services ended one or two years earlier would have their MSA scores included in the AYP calculations for LEP students. This would help school systems show—and get credit for—improving test scores among students who have recently attained English proficiency. During the 2002–03 school year, the performance of R-LEP students on the reading MSA was similar to that of the general student population.

English language learners exited from LEP subgroup*

Current Policy	Proposed Policy
Exited students' MSA scores don't count toward AYP for LEP subgroup	Exited students' MSA scores count toward AYP for LEP subgroup

* students whose ELL services ended two or fewer years previously

Geometry

MSDE proposes changing the way geometry performance targets are set and how high schools are held accountable for meeting them.

Current Policy

Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) for geometry are based on the performance of all 12th-graders who took the test. However, AYP calculations are based on cohort groups that extend back to middle school. High schools, therefore, are accountable for the performance of the entire cohort of geometry test-takers, even if a student in that cohort took the test in middle school.

Proposed Policy

Geometry AMOs would be based on the performance of students in all grades who take the geometry exam. To make accountability more equitable, middle school students' scores would count only toward system and state AYP, while high school students' scores would continue to count toward school, system, and state AYP.

Geometry

Current Policy	Proposed Policy
AYP based on the performance of cohort groups	AYP based on the performance of all students who took the geometry MSA in one school year
High schools are accountable for cohort members who took the test in middle school	High schools are not accountable for cohort members who took the test in middle school; middle school geometry results count toward system and state AYP only

Graduation rate

MSDE proposes relaxing its graduation-rate policy by allowing schools, systems, and the state to make AYP in graduation by meeting the established AMO or by making progress from one year to the next.

Current Policy

Each year, high schools, school systems, and the state must meet the graduation-rate AMO to make AYP. The AMO increases every three years toward the 90% graduation-rate goal.

Proposed Policy

High schools, school systems, and the state would make AYP in graduation rate if they meet the AMO or if they improve their rate from the previous year. They would still have to achieve the 90% graduation-rate goal by 2013–14.

Graduation rate

Current Policy	Proposed Policy
Graduation rate must meet the Annual Measurable Objective	Graduation rate must either meet the Annual Measurable Objective or improve from the previous year

Alternative assessments for students with disabilities

Federal test-participation requirements for students with disabilities have been amended to allow more students to take advantage of alternative assessments.

Current Policy

Students with severe cognitive disabilities may take the Alt-MSA—an alternative assessment aligned with Maryland's content standards—in place of the MSA. However, to satisfy USDE's test-participation requirements, the number of students taking the Alt-MSA cannot exceed 1% of all test takers.²

Continued on next page

Proposed Policy

The number of students taking the Alt-MSA and scoring Proficient or Advanced on it could not exceed 1% of all test takers.² Eliminating the Basic proficiency level from the participation equation reduces the number of students who count toward the 1% alternative-assessment limit.

Alternative assessments for students with disabilities

Current Policy	Proposed Policy
The number of students taking the Alt-MSA cannot exceed 1% of all test takers	The number of students taking the Alt-MSA and scoring Proficient or Advanced on it cannot exceed 1% of all test takers

Minimum group size

The Department has asked USDE for authorization to raise minimum group size at the school system and state levels and, at the school level, to count students in no more than one special-services subgroup.

Current Policy

For each of the eight racial/ethnic and special-services subgroups, Maryland's minimum group size is five—meaning five or more students must be enrolled in that subgroup to be held accountable for reading and math performance. If a school or system enrolls too few students in any subgroup to meet the minimum group size, it automatically makes AYP for that subgroup. (This protects schools from being unduly penalized when students in very small subgroups are absent from testing or perform poorly on the tests.) Maryland chose a minimum group size of five—currently the nation's smallest—to maximize the number of students for whom progress is measured. A larger

Minimum group size

Current Policy	Proposed Policy
At the school, system, and state levels, minimum group size is five students for each racial/ethnic and special-services subgroup	At the school level, continue minimum group size at five students, but count students in no more than one special-services subgroup, in the following order of priority: free and reduced-price meals, special education, limited English proficiency At the school system and state levels, raise minimum group size for <i>all</i> subgroups to 15% of total school system or state enrollment

subgroup size, such as 75 students, would exclude many thousands of students from AYP calculations.

Proposed Policy

One subgroup per student: At the school level, the five-student minimum group size would remain, but each student would be included in AYP for only one special-services subgroup, even if eligible for more than one. Students receiving free and reduced-price meals (FARM) alone or in combination with other services would be counted in the FARM subgroup only. Students receiving special-education services alone or in combination with ELL services would be counted in the special-education subgroup only. Students receiving ELL services alone would be counted in the LEP subgroup. This priority order derives from the

Continued on page 7

HSA/High School Diploma

Continued from page 1

force to explore comparable methods of measuring students' knowledge of algebra/data analysis, English, biology, and government. The task force will determine whether a comparable assessment is feasible, what it would look like, and which students would be eligible to take it.

Certificate of Program Completion

The Certificate of Program Completion¹ is available to any high school student with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) who completes all of his or her IEP requirements and whose IEP indicates his or her Certificate eligibility. Students working toward the High School Certificate of Program Completion will

be required to take only those assessments outlined in their IEPs. These assessments may include the Alt-MSA and/or the HSA.

Diploma by Examination

The Diploma by Examination¹ is available to Maryland residents no longer enrolled in high school. Non-enrolled citizens may earn a Diploma by Examination either by passing the GED Test or completing the Maryland Adult External Diploma Program. ■

¹ Regulations governing the Certificate of Program Completion and the Diploma by Examination are only minimally affected by the new high school completion proposal. The proposal: 1) requires that the Certificate of Program Completion be accompanied by an exit document citing the student's skills, and 2) renames the Diploma by Examination.

**Proposed Maryland High School Completion Policy
(beginning with students entering ninth grade in fall 2005)**

	Maryland High School Diploma ¹	Certificate of Program Completion ²	Diploma by Examination	
Students Eligible	All students enrolled in high school	Students with an IEP who have significant disabilities and who are enrolled in high school	Students not enrolled in high school	Students not enrolled in high school
Required Assessment	<p>NCLB Tests</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take the Geometry and Grade 10 Reading tests. <p>HSA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Passing Score Option: Take and pass all four HSA. (Students will have multiple opportunities for appropriate assistance and retesting.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Substitute Assessments: Students may substitute a passing score on one or more approved substitute assessments (e.g., Advanced Placement, SAT II) for a passing score on an HSA. Combined Score Option: Take all four HSA and earn the minimum³ score for each test and earn the combined⁴ score. (Students will have multiple opportunities for appropriate assistance and retesting.) <p>Note: Assessment results will be reviewed in 2008 to determine if changes in graduation requirements are necessary.</p>	<p>NCLB Tests</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take the Alt-MSA. <p>HSA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> May take HSA, depending on IEP determination Passing is not required. 	Take and pass all 5 national GED tests.	Take and pass the national competency-based, applied performance assessment for the External High School Program.
Other Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete state credit and service-learning requirements⁵ Attend school for four years past the eighth grade. Complete any local graduation requirements. Participate in intervention/appropriate assistance programs before retaking a failed HSA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The IEP Team determines the student is eligible for the Certificate. Attend school for four years past the eighth grade. Complete all IEP requirements. An Exit Document that cites the student's skills will accompany the Certificate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Age 16 Withdrawn from school for at least 3 months MD resident 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Age 18 Withdrawn from school for at least 3 months

HSA = Maryland High School Assessments (English, Algebra/Data Analysis, Government, Biology)
IEP = Individualized Education Program

¹ Assessment results will be reviewed in 2008 to determine if changes in graduation requirements are necessary.

² Only a small number of students with significant disabilities will pursue the Certificate of Program Completion. Eligibility for the Certificate is determined through the IEP process.

³ The minimum score is an acceptable score established by the Department that is below the passing score for an HSA.

⁴ The combined score is equal to the total of the four HSA passing scores established by the State Board in August 2003.

⁵ To earn a Maryland High School Diploma, students must earn a minimum of 21 high school credits, to include English (4), mathematics (3), science (3), social studies (3), fine arts (1), physical education (1/2), health education (1/2), and technology education (1); and foreign language (2) or advanced technology education (2) or complete a state-approved career and technology program. Students must also complete a service-learning requirement (75 hours of service or a locally designed, state-approved program).

Maryland's HOUSSE

Continued from page 1

HOUSSE Rules

In October 2003, the State Board approved Maryland's HOUSSE, which will help many experienced teachers meet the "highly qualified" definition without taking additional tests. The Maryland HOUSSE gives teachers points—100 points is "highly qualified"—for a variety of professional credentials and experiences accrued since the beginning of their undergraduate careers, such as earned college credit, years of satisfactory teaching performance, continuing professional development, leadership positions, committee membership, awards, publications, and presentations.³

This spring, MSDE will post on www.marylandpublicschools.org two rubrics—one for early childhood and elementary teachers and one for middle, secondary, and preK–12 music and art teachers—showing the categories comprising the HOUSSE, how many points the categories are worth, and the minimum/maximum points teachers may accumulate for each (see Tables 2 and 3).

The rubrics are included in *Using Maryland's HOUSSE*, a guide that helps teachers assess where they are in terms of fulfilling state and federal requirements and what they'll have to do before June 2006 to be considered "highly qualified." MSDE is now discussing with school systems how to ensure accuracy and accountability in the reporting process while minimizing the paperwork and procedural burden on teachers.

MSDE is also working with the U.S. Department of Education to streamline the HOUSSE for teachers of multiple subjects, such as those teaching special

education and English language learners. MSDE will issue more specific guidelines for these teachers in the fall.

Who's Already "Highly Qualified"?

Teachers meeting testing and/or coursework requirements

Under federal guidelines, early childhood and elementary teachers with a valid teaching certificate⁴ who have passed the appropriate content and pedagogy tests are already considered "highly qualified." Also "highly qualified" are middle, secondary, and K–12 teachers who have passed the appropriate content test in every core academic subject they teach or completed a major, coursework equivalent to a major, graduate degree, or advanced certification in each (see Table 1, page 1).

Teachers with an APC

All early childhood, elementary, middle, and secondary teachers holding an Advanced Professional Certificate (APC) and teaching a subject that matches their endorsement earn 100 points on Maryland's HOUSSE—that is, they're already "highly qualified." Furthermore, a teacher holding an elementary APC is considered "highly qualified" for middle school as well.

Nationally certified teachers

Also "highly qualified" according to the HOUSSE are early childhood, elementary, middle, and secondary teachers who have earned national certification (in an appropriate content area or areas) from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. ■



¹ hired after the first day of the 2002–03 school year

² teaching core academic subjects


³ All professional credentials and experiences must be specific to the core academic subject taught.

⁴ Standard Professional Certificate, Advanced Professional Certificate, or Resident Teacher Certificate

Maryland Core Academic Subject (CAS) Area Competency Rubric for Early Childhood (ECE) or Elementary Teachers Working in Elementary Schools

Table 2

Name: _____ SSN: _____ School System: _____ School: _____

	COLUMN 1	COLUMN 2	COLUMN 3	COLUMN 4	COLUMN 5			
OPTIONS	APC and/or NBC	Course Work in the CAS for ECE or Elementary Teachers	Years of Satisfactory Teaching Experience	Continuing Professional Development	Activities, Service, Awards, and Presentations related to Early Childhood or Elementary Education			
COMPETENCY TYPE	Hold Advanced Professional Certificate (APC) issued by MSDE in early childhood or elementary education and/or Achieve certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards in early childhood (EC/GEN) or elementary education (MC/GEN)	Earn semester hours of content course work* with a grade of "C" or better or MSDE CPD credit in: Math min.9 (college math, algebra, geometry, finite math, trigonometry, statistics, calculus, etc.) Science min.9 (biology, botany, physics, chemistry, physical science, earth science, astronomy, etc.) English _____ LA/rdg _____ Soc.Stu. _____ (history, political science, geography, sociology, economics, anthropology) Arts _____ (music, art, drama, theatre) Teach a content course at an IHE:	Must be full-time (not less than 9 consecutive mos. for 50% or more of the school week or the equiv.) and assigned in early childhood or elementary education: ECE: _____ yrs. X 4 pts. = _____ Elementary: _____ yrs. X 4 pts. = _____	Earn semester hours of graduate education course work w/grade "B" or better: _____ _____ Earn MSDE CPD credits for education-related workshops: _____ _____ Teach an education -related course at an IHE or at a local school _____ _____	Documented service on a local, state, or national committee to: • develop, select, or evaluate content standards • develop, select, or evaluate content curriculum • align local content standards with state standards • develop, validate, or evaluate content assessments Refereed Publications: • Publish content article in a textbook or a refereed state, regional, or national journal	Documented service as a: • Department chair or team leader • Mentor teacher • Cooperating teacher for intern • School Improvement Team member Or Other locally approved leadership role	• Local Teacher of the Year • State Teacher of the Year • Milken Award winner • Present academic content at local, state, regional, or national professional meeting • Performance (artistic) in field of teaching	
POINT(S) ALLOWED	100 points per activity listed above  You have 100 points and are highly qualified!	1 point per credit earned or taught Minimum 40 points required with 9 points each in math & science	4 points per year Maximum 50 points	1 point per credit earned or taught for a maximum 10 points	1 point per documented activity, service, award, or presentation Maximum 10 points			
		# Hrs.:	# Years:	# Hrs.:	# Activities:	# Service:	# Awards:	# Presentations:
	TOTAL Points:	TOTAL Points:	TOTAL Points:	TOTAL Points:	TOTAL Points:	TOTAL Points:	TOTAL Points:	GRAND TOTAL: _____


*Course work (other than reading courses) from a department, school, or college of education with an EDU prefix is not acceptable for content course work. Credits earned using CLEP are acceptable if they are reflected on the official transcript.

Table 3

Maryland Core Academic Subject (CAS) Area Competency Rubric for Middle, Secondary, and PreK-12 (Art & Music) Teachers

Name: _____ SSN: _____ School System: _____ School: _____

Note: Middle, secondary, and PreK-12 (art & music) teachers who have not achieved National Board Certification or who do not hold an Advanced Professional Certificate issued by MSDE must obtain 100 points, with a minimum of 30 points in column 2, in order to be highly qualified.

	COLUMN 1	COLUMN 2	COLUMN 3	COLUMN 4	COLUMN 5			
OPTIONS	APC and/or NBC	Course Work in the CAS	Years of Satisfactory Teaching Experience	Continuing Professional Development	Activities, Service, Awards, and Presentations related to the CAS			
COMPETENCY TYPE	Hold Advanced Professional Certificate (APC) issued by MSDE in CAS being taught (Elementary APC acceptable for middle school level) and/or Achieve certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards in CAS being taught.	Earn semester hours of content course work* with a grade of "C" or better or MSDE CPD credit : _____ _____ _____ _____ Teach a content course at an IHE: _____ _____	Must be full-time (not less than 9 consecutive mos. for 50% or more of the school week or the equiv.) and assigned in middle, secondary, or PreK-12 (for art or music): ____ yrs. X 4 pts. = ____	Earn semester hours of graduate education course work w/grade "B" or better: _____ _____ _____ Earn MSDE CPD credits for education-related workshops: _____ _____ _____ Teach an education -related course at an IHE or at a local school _____ _____ _____	Documented service on a local, state, or national committee to: • develop, select, or evaluate content standards • develop, select, or evaluate content curriculum • align local content standards with state standards • develop, validate, or evaluate content assessments Refereed Publications: • Publish content article in a text-book or a refereed state, regional, or national journal _____ _____	Documented service as a: • Department chair or team leader • Mentor teacher • Cooperating teacher for intern • School Improvement Team member Or • Other locally approved leadership role _____ _____	• Local Teacher of the Year • State Teacher of the Year • Milken Award winner • Present academic content at local, state, regional, or national professional meeting • Performance (artistic) in field of teaching _____ _____	
POINT(S) ALLOWED	100 points per activity listed above  You have 100 points and are highly qualified!	1 point per credit earned or taught Minimum 30 points required	4 points per year Maximum 50 points	1 point per credit earned or taught for a maximum 10 points	1 point per documented activity, service, award, or presentation Maximum 10 points			
		# Hrs.:	# Years:	# Hrs.:	# Activities:	# Service:	# Awards:	# Presentations:
	TOTAL Points:	TOTAL Points:	TOTAL Points:	TOTAL Points:	TOTAL Points:			GRAND TOTAL: ____

*Course work (other than reading courses) from a department, school, or college of education with an EDU prefix is not acceptable for content course work. Credits earned using CLEP are acceptable if they are reflected on the official transcript.

Verbatim Reading Accommodation

Maryland is instituting two procedural changes this year affecting the verbatim reading accommodation for students receiving special education or English language learner (ELL) services. The first change is auditing schools to make sure the accommodation is assigned appropriately. The second is modifying score reporting and accountability to factor out invalidations caused by the accommodation.

Who should receive the accommodation?

The verbatim reading accommodation may be provided to students receiving special education or ELL services who are unable to access text or reading materials. The determination is made by each student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or ELL team.

Considerations guiding the decision to provide the accommodation will differ based on the needs of each student. The fact that a student is performing below grade level does not in itself justify supplying the accommodation.

When the decision is made to provide the accommodation, it must be provided on a regular, ongoing basis in instruction and on all state and local assessments. Schools may not offer the verbatim reading accommodation on an as-needed basis—or only on state tests.

Auditing the accommodation

Because the number of students receiving the verbatim reading accommodation varies significantly among school systems, and because the overall number receiving the accommodation on state tests is higher than expected, MSDE will begin auditing schools to ensure fairness and equity in how the accommodation is applied.

The audits—to be conducted in all grades and subjects tested by the MSA and HSA—are designed to verify that each student receiving the accommodation on state tests has it documented in his or her IEP, ELL plan, or Section 504 plan and, most importantly, that the accommodation is provided to the student as a part of his or her regular instructional program.

Eliminating the accommodation's effect on MSA scores

Because the reading MSA in grades 3 and 4 includes questions that measure students' basic reading skills, providing a verbatim reading accommodation creates a "non-standard" test administration. That's why 3rd-graders receiving the accommodation had their reading scores invalidated last year.

However, now that MSDE can produce subscores on the MSA (see page 8), invalidations caused by the accommodation can be factored out.¹ Students' responses on the reading skills section (General Reading Processes) can be separated from those on the comprehension sections (Comprehension of Informational Text and Comprehension of Literary Text). Scale scores and proficiency levels for third- and fourth-graders receiving the accommodation will be based on the latter two sections, and AYP calculations won't be affected by invalidations. ■

¹ Because the MSA was administered for the first time in grades 4, 6, and 7 this year, MSDE cannot produce subscores for those grades. Subscores will be produced only for grades 3, 5, 8, and 10. However, scoring and reporting procedures can be modified in both grades 3 and 4 to provide individual student results and to factor out invalidations.

HSA FAQ

Following are the questions MSDE is most frequently asked about the High School Assessments (HSA). As many of the questions were submitted this spring by Maryland PTA members, the answers may prove helpful when talking with parents about the tests.

What are the High School Assessments?

The HSA are tests in four core subjects: English I, government, algebra/data analysis, and biology. In June, the State Board of Education is scheduled to decide whether students must pass the HSA to graduate.¹

The HSA contain multiple-choice questions and questions requiring written responses. These questions are based on the content outlined in Maryland's Core Learning Goals. More information on the Core Learning Goals and sample HSA questions are on the Web at www.mdk12.org/mspp/high_school.

When do students take the HSA?

Students typically take the English I test in ninth grade. Students take the other tests—algebra/data analysis, government, and biology—whenever they complete the course. For example, some students may take algebra in seventh grade while others may not take it until tenth grade.

How many times may a student take an assessment?

Students may take each HSA as many times as they need to pass it. The tests are administered three times each year: January, May, and summer.

If students fail an assessment, will they be able to retake it during the school year to ensure they graduate on time?

Students will typically have passed the HSA well before their senior year, which limits the tests' potential to delay graduation. Most students begin taking the HSA in ninth grade, meaning they'll have several chances to receive extra help and retake any failed tests before graduation. (Students needing to retake tests can do so three times a year, during annual administrations in January, May, and summer.)

By the time the class of 2009 graduates,² MSDE will have reduced test scoring time, meaning school systems will receive HSA results more quickly than they do now. However, seniors who have not yet passed one or more HSA and take the test(s) during the May administration still may not know their scores by the time of their graduation ceremonies. School systems will decide if these students may "walk the stage" with the rest of their graduating class.

How long have the HSA been in development?

The HSA development and implementation timeline is now more than a decade old. MSDE began working on the HSA in 1993, creating coordinating and content teams to steer test development. The work of these groups—consisting primarily of teachers, administrators, and instructional supervisors—led to the Core Learning Goals. By 1996, all 24 school systems had aligned their high school curricula to these Goals.

Sample HSA test items were first administered to students in 1999. In 2000, schools administered the assessments to all students taking HSA courses, but no scores were reported. Taking the tests became a graduation requirement in 2001–02—the same year that scores were first reported on students' transcripts as percentile ranks. The next year, results were reported on transcripts as scale scores. The new proposal before the Board—that students must pass the HSA to graduate—would first affect students entering ninth grade in 2005.

Will out-of-state students transferring into Maryland be required to pass the HSA?

If a student transferring into a Maryland school system has already earned high school credit for the HSA-tested subjects and the school system accepts those credits, then he/she will not be required to take the HSA.

Beginning in fall 2005, if an out-of-state student transfers into a Maryland school and has not yet taken English I, algebra, government, or biology, then he/she must take the course and pass the corresponding HSA.

Who decided what content is tested by the HSA?

Teachers, principals, college faculty, parents, employers, and members of Maryland's educational and professional organizations helped draft the Core Learning Goals, the content on which the HSA are based. Each test item undergoes an extensive review process—involving school system staff, teachers, and principals—before it is included in an assessment. Learn more about test development and scoring on the Web at www.mdk12.org/mspp/high_school/.

What are the passing scores for the HSA and who set them?

The passing score for algebra/data analysis is 412; for English I, 407; for government, 394; and for biology, 400. The State Board of Education set HSA passing scores in August 2003. MSDE recommended these scores to the Board after conducting a week-long standard-setting process that involved more than 100 teachers, administrators, instructional supervisors, parents, and content and testing experts.

For more information on how standards were set, see *Maryland Classroom*, Vol. 8, No. 4 (October 2003), available under News Room/Publications on www.marylandpublicschools.org.

How many students are expected to pass the tests on their first try?

In 2003, 53% of students passed the algebra/data analysis test; 40% passed English I; 54% passed biology; and 60% passed government. But other states' testing experiences—and Maryland's own experience with the Functional Tests—show that the number of students passing a test on the first try rises significantly when passing becomes a graduation requirement. And, of course, students will have many opportunities to pass the HSA.

For more detailed HSA results—including scores disaggregated by race/ethnicity and special services—go to www.mdreportcard.org.

The current HSA proposal allows students to substitute their scores on another test for scores on the HSA. Who will choose the substitute tests and set the passing scores?

The proposal linking HSA scores to graduation contains an option for students to substitute performance on other state-approved tests for performance on the HSA. The substitute tests and acceptable scores have not yet been identified. If the HSA proposal is passed, MSDE will convene a committee of teachers, principals, parents, students, and testing experts to recommend appropriate substitute tests and the minimum score required on each. The substitute tests must show adequate alignment to the HSA in terms of content and rigor. Examples of tests that the committee might consider are the SAT II tests and the Advanced Placement (AP) exams.

Are the HSA and the SAT aligned in terms of content and level of difficulty?

The College Board designed the SAT to predict students' readiness for college work. Consequently, only those planning to attend college—about 68% of Maryland's student population—will take the SAT. The HSA, like the Functional Tests before them, were designed—and their passing scores set—to establish a minimum performance level for the state's high school graduates. Therefore, all Maryland high school students, regardless of their post-secondary plans, must take and pass the HSA.

By design, the HSA is less rigorous than the SAT. The courses upon which the HSA are based—algebra, English I, government, and biology—are not considered advanced high school courses. In fact, most students take them in ninth or tenth grade. While all students should be challenged to take the most advanced courses possible, it wouldn't be fair to require that every student pass a college-level graduation test. Obviously, not all high school graduates will attend college, and that should in no way preclude them from earning a Maryland High School Diploma.

However, schools and school systems regularly prepare their students for the SAT as well. And MSDE supports a number of programs to improve SAT participation and performance. For instance, MSDE has worked with university faculty and school system supervisors to define the content students need to succeed in their first few college math courses and then refine high school curricula accordingly. MSDE also encourages SAT and AP participation by helping disadvantaged students pay the registration fees for these tests.

Last year, Maryland's average SAT scores increased two points to 509 in verbal and two points to 515 in math. The College Board attributes these gains to more students taking advanced courses, especially in math and science. (Maryland has posted a 10-year, 12-point math gain).

Will teachers be accountable for the HSA results of their students?

MSDE will provide schools with HSA scores and subscores (see page 8) for each test taker, so that principals and teachers can study patterns of instructional strengths and weaknesses. Schools will then be able to further analyze the data as they see fit. However, MSDE will not analyze or publish any HSA information on a teacher-by-teacher basis.

Did MSDE consider other options besides making students pass the HSA?

To get the public engaged in a discussion about the HSA, MSDE floated a proposal last December that a few different diplomas be awarded to students based on their HSA performance. When MSDE shared this proposal with teachers, parents, and students, many suggested alternative approaches.

So in February, MSDE revised the proposal based on the feedback received and submitted it to the State Board of Education for action in June. The revised proposal contains just one path to a Maryland High School Diploma for all enrolled students,³ but allows students to earn a minimum score on each test and a combined score on all four and still receive a Diploma.

Is the Department considering computerized HSA scoring?

The HSA is made up of multiple-choice and constructed-response items. The multiple-choice items are currently scored by machine, while the constructed-response items are scored by at least two trained scorers. However, technology being developed now will allow for the electronic scoring of constructed-response items as well. MSDE is studying this technology and hopes to use it once it's proven reliable—likely within 2–3 years. Recent studies suggest that the new technology could eventually decrease scoring time by several weeks.

The state is planning to offer online HSA courses for students. When and how will students be able to access the courses?

MSDE is now developing online courses to help prepare students for the HSA. Teachers may use course modules with students as an intervention strategy, and students may take the courses themselves to review tested material. Teachers and students will be issued a Web address and password that allows them to access the courses wherever there's an Internet connection. The algebra/data analysis course will be field-tested this fall, and the remaining courses will likely go online as early as January 2005.

Can middle school students earn credit for high school courses if they pass the HSA in those courses?

This policy is decided by each school system's board of education. There is nothing in current or proposed state regulations that would prohibit school systems from awarding students high school credit for high school-level courses taken in middle school.

How will English language learners and students in special education pass the tests?

English Language Learners: Approximately 3.5% of students statewide are learning English, and only a small portion of those students are in high school. Maryland, like other states, gauges students' progress in acquiring English fluency throughout their education. Schools typically enroll English language learners in credit-bearing courses when it's determined they can be successful in them. Students new to the U.S. usually perform well in math courses rather quickly and improve their performance in courses that require English fluency over time.

Special Education: About 13% of Maryland's students receive special-education services. The vast majority of these students are supplied accommodations that help compensate for their disabilities. Any accommodation provided in daily instruction and on classroom assessments must also be provided on the HSA. Students with significant disabilities may pursue a Certificate of Program Completion, which Maryland began offering in the late 1970s as a diploma alternative for students not receiving instruction in the core curriculum.⁴ Each student's IEP team determines Certificate eligibility.

To satisfy federal testing requirements, MSDE converted the geometry HSA into its grade 10 math test. Why can't MSDE use the English I HSA as its grade 10 reading test?

The federal No Child Left Behind Act requires that states annually assess reading and math performance in grades 3–8 and in high school. The tenth-grade reading MSA and the geometry MSA fulfill the high school portion of this requirement. The U.S. Department of Education won't allow Maryland to use the English I HSA to measure high school reading achievement because federal officials stipulated that high school tests must be of at least tenth-grade rigor. (The English I HSA is a ninth-grade test.) But if Maryland instead administers the English II HSA (which is of tenth-grade rigor), the state could use those scores to satisfy federal accountability requirements and discontinue the tenth-grade reading MSA. MSDE is currently exploring this option.

How does the state ensure HSA reliability and validity?

Educational Testing Service (ETS), the company that designs the SAT, is developing the HSA. MSDE's contract with ETS requires that the company produce reliable and valid assessments. To further ensure reliability and validity, Maryland works with several technical advisors, including psychometricians, consultants, and University of Maryland faculty.

A detailed technical report is available under Testing/High School Assessment on www.marylandpublicschools.org. The report is frequently updated as ongoing studies yield new data that keep the tests in compliance with the highest technical standards.

How will school systems and schools fund programs to help students pass the HSA?

In 1999, the State Board of Education adopted Every Child Achieving, a report recommending that \$49 million in state money be earmarked for an academic intervention program—a program Board members said was necessary to help students pass the HSA.

Meanwhile, the Thornton Commission, convened to study education financing in Maryland, created a need-based funding formula that substantially increases state aid to public schools. In fact, the money guaranteed through the formula—passed by the General Assembly in 2002 as part of the Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act—well exceeds the State Board's 1999 recommendation.

While budget deficits jeopardize full funding of the estimated \$1.3 billion Act, school systems have already received an additional \$253 million. This coming fiscal year, systems are expected to receive an additional \$304 million—the largest one-year, K–12 funding increase in Maryland's history—bringing total state education funding to \$3 billion. Furthermore, Bridge to Excellence money specifically targets students receiving special services—the same students who will likely need extra help on the HSA.

What resources will MSDE provide to help students pass the HSA?

The following resources should help students succeed on the HSA:

- **Public Release Test Forms:** Each year, MSDE releases one test form for each HSA and posts it on www.mdk12.org. There are now four test forms per subject on the site, along with their answer keys. (The 2004 test forms will be added to the site this summer.) Users can also take sample tests online, practice scoring constructed-response items, and link each test item to the Core Learning Goal it measures. The 2000 and 2001 test forms include item analyses indicating the percentage of students statewide who selected each answer on the multiple-choice questions. Item analyses will be available for the 2002 and 2003 test forms this spring.
- **Online Courses:** This fall, MSDE will introduce an online algebra course, with progress checks, that teachers may use with students needing extra help on the algebra/data analysis HSA. Online courses for the remaining three HSA-tested subjects should be online beginning in January 2005.
- **Standardized Formative Assessments:** MSDE is determining test vendors' interest in producing formative assessments to use in conjunction with the HSA. The assessments would be aligned with the Core Learning Goals and would be available to school systems at a reduced cost.
- **HSA & MSA Subscores:** The 2004 HSA and MSA will generate subscores (see page 8), which will help teachers understand better—and earlier—how their students are faring in each subject.
- **Skill Analyses:** MSDE is studying several methods for providing teachers and students a detailed analysis of the skills displayed on each scored HSA. Students would be able to use the information to focus their preparation when retaking tests. Teachers and principals could use the analyses to examine course content and instruction. ■

¹ The current HSA proposal states that, to graduate with a high school diploma, students must either pass all four HSA or earn a minimum score on each test and a combined score of 1613. In this article, all references to "passing" the tests include earning the required minimum and combined scores.

² the first class to be affected by the HSA proposal

³ Students not enrolled in high school for at least three months may earn a Diploma by Examination.

⁴ formerly the Certificate of Attendance

NCLB Consolidated Plan

Continued from page 3

amount of students in each group: 36% of all students receive FARM; 13% receive special-education services; and 3.5% receive ELL services.

Students frequently receive more than one service. For instance, just under half of all elementary and middle school students in special education also receive FARM. Limiting student assignment to one special-services subgroup would reduce from five to three³ the number of times a school can be held accountable for the performance of a single student.

15% minimum group size: At the school system and state levels, MSDE would raise minimum group size to 15% of student enrollment, meaning students in *any* subgroup must comprise at least 15% of the total student population in the system or state to be factored into AYP.

While a minimum group size of five is appropriate for schools (especially when coupled with confidence intervals), applying the number to systems is overly burdensome and resulted last year in none of the state's 24 school systems making AYP. ■

¹ Schools would decide on a student-by-student basis whether to administer the reading MSA or the IPT and whether to factor math scores into AYP. Students whose math scores are exempted from AYP calculations would not receive individual results.

² The 1% limit applies only to school systems and the state—not to individual schools.

³ 1) "All Students" group; 2) appropriate racial/ethnic subgroup; 3) designated special-services subgroup

2004 MSA & HSA: A Timeline

January

Administer **HSA**.

Feb./March¹

Administer **MSA** to grades 3–8 and 10. Administer **Alt-MSA**.

April

Send January **HSA** results to school systems.

May

Administer **HSA**.

Hold public hearing on tying a high school diploma to **HSA** performance.

June

Send **MSA** Home Reports for grades 3, 5, 8, and 10 to school systems (for distribution to parents).

Post **MSA/Alt-MSA** results and AYP data for grades 3, 5, 8, and 10 on www.mdreportcard.org.

Post on www.mdreportcard.org the names of schools in School Improvement.

Vote on tying a high school diploma to **HSA** performance.

July

Set **MSA** standards for grades 4, 6, and 7.²

July/August

Administer **HSA**.³

August

Send 2004 **HSA** results and labels to school systems (for distribution to parents/students).

Post January and May **HSA** results on www.mdreportcard.org.

Update state, system, and school AYP calculations with geometry results and graduation and attendance rates. Repost on www.mdreportcard.org.

Post **MSA** results for grades 4, 6, and 7 on www.mdreportcard.org.

September

Send **MSA** Home Reports for grades 4, 6, and 7 to school systems (for distribution to parents).

Convene task force to study assessments comparable to the **HSA**.

¹ Some school systems began administering the MSA in February this year to avoid scheduling conflicts caused by the Primary Election in March.

² See *Maryland Classroom*, Vol. 8, No. 4 (October 2003) for an overview of the standard-setting process.

³ Summer scores will be incorporated into 2005 HSA data.



MSDE to Report Subscores on 2004 MSA and HSA

Maryland School Assessment*	
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ General Reading Processes ■ Comprehension of Informational Text ■ Comprehension of Literary Text
Math	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Algebra/Patterns or Functions ■ Geometry/Measurement ■ Statistics/Probability ■ Number Sense/Computation ■ Processes of Math
Geometry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Representing/Analyzing Geometric Figures ■ Solving Problems with Geometric Properties ■ Solving Problems with Concepts of Measurement

*Subscores will be reported for grades 3, 5, 8, and 10 only.

Maryland Classroom

A Publication from the Maryland State Department of Education

Office of Academic Policy

Communications and Strategic Planning Office

Ronald Peiffer, Deputy State Superintendent

Nan Mulqueen, Editor-in-Chief

Edward L. Root, President, State Board of Education

Nancy S. Grasmick, Secretary-Treasurer of the Board

State Superintendent of Schools

Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr., Governor

The Maryland State Department of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, age, national origin, religion, or disability in matters affecting employment or in providing access to programs. For inquiries related to departmental policy, contact the Equity Assurance and Compliance Branch, Maryland State Department of Education, 200 West Baltimore Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21201-2595, Phone: 410.767.0433, TTY/TDD: 410.333.6442, Fax: 410.767.0431.

If you have any questions or comments about this publication, please contact Nan Mulqueen, editor, at 410.767.0475.

High School Assessments

English I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reading and Responding to Literature ■ Composing Skills ■ Controlling Written Language ■ Evaluating Language Use and Content of Texts
Biology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Skills and Processes of Biology ■ Structure and Function of Biological Molecules ■ Structure and Function of Cells and Organisms ■ Inheritance of Traits ■ Mechanism of Evolutionary Change ■ Interdependence of Organisms in the Biosphere
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ U.S. Government Structure, Function, and Principles ■ Systems of Government and Foreign Policy ■ Protecting Rights and Maintaining Order ■ Impact of Geography on Governmental Policy ■ Economic Principles, Institution, and Processes
Algebra/Data Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Analyzing Patterns and Functions ■ Modeling Real-World Situations ■ Collecting, Organizing, and Analyzing Data ■ Using Data to Make Predictions