

Glossary of Common Assessment Terms

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) — An element of the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation that requires all public schools to make satisfactory improvement in student achievement each year. By 2014, 100% of students are expected to be proficient.

Advanced Placement (AP) — A program of challenging college-level courses available to students in high school.

Alternate Maryland School Assessment (Alt-MSA) — State tests designed for students with significant cognitive disabilities who cannot participate in the MSA.

Brief Constructed Response (BCR) — A type of item on a test that requires a student to provide a short written answer.

Criterion-Referenced Evaluation System (CRES) — Locally-developed testing program administered to students in grades 2-12, designed to measure student achievement of the FCPS essential curriculum.

Disaggregated Data — Data reported by subcategory, for example grade level, gender, or race/ethnicity.

English Language Learners (ELL) — Students with a primary or home language other than English and limited or no age-appropriate ability to understand, speak, read or write English.

Enrollment — The number of students enrolled as of September 30 in grades pre-kindergarten through 12, including non-graded special education students.

Essential Curriculum — Defines skills and competencies that all FCPS students are expected to achieve by high school graduation: effective communication, problem solving and critical thinking, social cooperation and self-discipline, responsible citizenship, and lifelong learning.

Extended Constructed Response (ECR) — A type of item on a test that requires a student to provide an extended written answer usually in two or more paragraphs.

Free/Reduced-Price Meals (FARM) — Category of students whose applications meet the United States Department of Agriculture's family size and income guidelines to qualify them for school lunch and/or breakfast at no or low cost.

Grade-Level Proficiency — The level of academic performance sufficient for a student to succeed at the next level of school or next level of a course.

High School Assessments (HSA) — End-of-course tests that students take as they complete high school level courses in Algebra and Data Analysis, Government, Biology, and English 10. Passing each HSA, or receiving a combined score of 1602, is a graduation requirement beginning with the graduating class of 2009.

International Baccalaureate (IB) — A demanding and comprehensive two-year international curriculum for a pre-university diploma program. The IB program has earned a reputation for rigorous assessment and helps students gain access to the world's leading universities.

Interventions — A series of research-based strategies designed to assist students with specific academic difficulties.

Maryland School Assessment (MSA) — Annual state tests in reading and mathematics required by the federal *No Child Left Behind* legislation. Students can demonstrate “Basic,” “Proficient” or “Advanced” levels of performance on these tests. The combined percentage of students scoring “Proficient” and “Advanced” is used to determine whether schools, districts and states are demonstrating Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).

Modified Assessments (Mod-MSA or Mod-HSA) — State tests designed for special education students who are learning standard content but with alternative achievement standards.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) — The *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) is a federal law that provides federal funding for poor children in return for improvements in their academic progress. It requires states to establish learning standards, create annual assessments to measure student progress in reading and math in grades 3-8 and once in high school. It also requires states to report results disaggregated by subcategories.

Norm-Referenced Test (NRT) — A test that measures a student’s academic achievement as compared to students in the same grade across the nation.

Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) — A standardized test administered by high schools across the country to any 10th or 11th grader. It is considered to be a practice and diagnostic test for the SAT and is the basis for qualification in the National Merit Scholarship Program.

Readiness Standards — Maryland’s Pre-K-12 Academic Readiness requires districts to establish readiness standards at key grades of transition, so that intervention programs can be provided for students who do not meet established criteria. FCPS has developed standards for grades 2, 5, and 8.

<http://www.fcps.org/content/publications/ReadinessStandards.pdf>

SAT — A national college entrance examination designed to measure critical reading, mathematical reasoning, and writing skills.

SAT-10 — A norm-referenced test administered in Grade 2 designed to measure mathematics, reading, and environment skills.

Scale Score — Describes a student’s achievement within a range of possible scores.

Selected Responses (SR) — A type of item on a test that requires a student to select an answer from usually four different answer choices.

Student Information System (SIS) — A computerized student database containing a variety of data and information, including enrollment, attendance, academic grades and test scores.

Title I — A federal initiative to provide supplemental instructional services, with emphasis on reading and mathematics, to meet student needs in schools with a high concentration of low-income families.

Voluntary State Curriculum (VSC) — Developed by the Maryland State Department of Education, this curriculum defines what students should know and be able to do at each grade (preK through 8) in four content areas: reading/English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. It also defines what students should know and be able to do in 10th grade reading. The VSC aligns the Maryland Content Standards and the Maryland Assessment Program and is available in a number of formats for teachers, central office staff, students, and parents.