

Spring 2026



Maryland

STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



MCAP Social Studies 8 Score Interpretation Guide for Parents/Caregivers

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1.0 General Information for Parents/Caregivers and Educators

1.1 Background

The Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program (MCAP) will provide students, parents/caregivers, educators and the community with better student information at a faster pace. The goal is to gather information that helps Maryland schools strengthen our instruction and improve student performance so that our graduates are ready to move into the workforce or a postsecondary institution.

1.2 MCAP Social Studies 8 Assessment

The primary purpose of MCAP is to provide high-quality assessments to measure students' progress toward college and career readiness.

The MCAP Social Studies 8 assessment was administered in either computer-based or paper-based format. The test assessed student mastery of the Maryland State Social Studies Standards: Civics, Peoples of the Nations and World, Geography, Economics, History, and Skills and Processes.

1.3 Confidentiality of Reporting Results

Individual student performance results on the MCAP are confidential and may be released only in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. (20 U.S.C. Section 1232g). Aggregated student performance data are made available to the public and do not contain the names of individual students or teachers.

1.4 Purpose of the Guide

This guide provides information on the individual student reports that will help parents/caregivers understand their student's test results.

Sample reports included in this guide are for illustration purposes only. They are provided to show the basic layout of the reports and the information they provide. Sample reports do not include actual data from any test administration.

2.0 Understanding the MCAP Individual Student Report (ISR)

2.1 Types of Scores on the MCAP ISR

Student performance on the MCAP Social Studies 8 assessment is described on the Individual Student Report (ISR) using scale scores, performance levels, and subclaim performance indicators. State, Local Education Agency (LEA), and school average results are included in relevant sections of the report to help parents/caregivers understand how their student's performance compares to that of other students. In some instances, a note will appear in place of average results for a school and/or LEA. This indicates that there are too few students to maintain student privacy and therefore results are not reported.

2.1.1 Scale Score

A scale score is a numerical value that summarizes student performance. Not all students respond to the same set of test items, so each student's raw score (actual points earned on test items) is adjusted for the slight differences in difficulty among the various forms and administrations of the test. The resulting scale score allows for an accurate comparison across test forms and administration years within a grade. For example, a student who earns an overall scale score of 750 on one form of the grade 8 social studies assessment would be expected to earn an overall scale score of 750 on any other form of the grade 8 social studies assessment. Furthermore, the student's overall scale score and level of mastery of concepts and skills would be comparable to a student who took the same assessment the previous year or the following year.

2.1.2 Performance Level

Each performance level is a broad, categorical level defined by a student's overall scale score and is used to report overall student performance by describing how well students met the expectations for their grade level/course. Each performance level is defined by a range of overall scale scores for the assessment. There are four performance levels for the MCAP:

- Level 4: Distinguished Learner
- Level 3: Proficient Learner
- Level 2: Developing Learner
- Level 1: Beginning Learner

Students performing at levels 3 and 4 have demonstrated readiness for the next grade level/course, and ultimately, are likely on track for college and careers.

2.1.3 Sample of Social Studies 8 ISR



Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program

GRADE 8 SOCIAL STUDIES

A

FIRSTNAME002 H. LASTNAME002

Date of Birth: 11/02/2012 ID: 1312810616 Grade: 7

Local Education Agency (LEA): SAMPLE DISTRICT NAME

SAMPPL SCHOOL NAME1_SCH2

MARYLAND

SPRING 2026

B

Social Studies Assessment Report, 2025–2026

This report shows the level of proficiency attained by FIRSTNAME002 on the MCAP Assessment. The results from this summative assessment reflect a snapshot of your student's progress towards meeting the Maryland Social Studies Standards. These results should be used with school and district level assessments to gauge your student's progress towards proficiency in social studies.

How Can You Use This Report?

C

Ask your student's teachers:

- What do you see as my student's academic strengths and areas for improvement?
- How will you use these test results to provide remediation or enrichment to my student during this academic year?
- How can I work with my student to support your efforts in improving my student's academic performance?

MCAP Resources

For practice tests and additional resources pertaining to the MCAP Social Studies Assessments, please visit <https://marylandpublicschools.org/about/Pages/DAAIT/Assessment/MCAP/SocialStudies.aspx>

How Did FIRSTNAME002 Perform Overall?

Performance Level 2

D

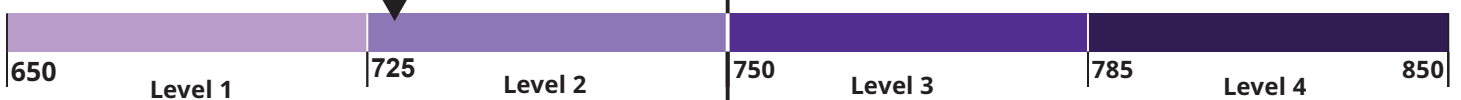
A description of the Performance Levels can be found on the back of this page.

- Level 4** Distinguished Learner
- Level 3** Proficient Learner
- Level 2** Developing Learner
- Level 1** Beginning Learner

E

Your student's score

726



School Average



LEA Average



State Average



F

How Students in Maryland Performed

G



Percent of students at each performance level

How are assessment results used?

The charts above allow you to compare your student's level of performance to other students who took the same assessment across the school, district, and state during the Spring administration.

How Did Your Student Perform in Social Studies?

H

CIVICS

Your student performed about the same as other **Beginning Learners**. Students show proficiency by demonstrating the historical development of the fundamental concepts and processes of authority, power, and influence with particular emphasis on civic reasoning.

PEOPLES OF THE NATIONS AND WORLD

Your student performed about the same as other **Beginning Learners**. Students show proficiency by demonstrating knowledge of the people of the United States and the world using a historically grounded, multidisciplinary approach in order to recognize multiple narratives and acknowledge the diversity and commonality of the human experience.

GEOGRAPHY

Your student performed about the same as other **Beginning Learners**. Students show proficiency by demonstrating knowledge about the role of culture, technology, and the environment in the location, distribution, and impact of human activities using geographic tools and spatial thinking in order to demonstrate a significance of place.

ECONOMICS

Your student performed about the same as other **Developing Learners**. Students show proficiency by demonstrating decisions made by individuals and groups using economic reasoning in order to understand the historical development and current status of economic principles, institutions, and processes needed to be effective citizens, consumers, and workers participating in local communities, the nation, and the world.

HISTORY




Your student performed about the same as other **Proficient or Distinguished Learners**. Students show proficiency by demonstrating an understanding of significant events, ideas, beliefs, and themes to identify patterns and trends, and to analyze how individuals and societies have changed over time to make connections to the present in their communities, Maryland, the United States, and the world.

SKILLS AND PROCESSES

Your student performed about the same as other **Beginning Learners**. Students show proficiency by inquiring about civics, geography, economics, history, and people and nations of the world using disciplinary literacy skills and processes to critically evaluate content through a variety of source materials across disciplines and use reading, writing, and other forms of communication to develop, defend, and critique arguments in order to take informed action.

LEGEND

Your student performed about the same as:

 Distinguished or Proficient Learners	 Developing Learners	 Beginning Learners
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I

J

Social Studies Performance Level Descriptions

Level 4 Distinguished Learners: *Distinguished learners* demonstrate advanced proficiency in applying critical thinking to understand the historical development of the United States and its relationship to the present. Learners at this level demonstrate advanced proficiency in inquiring about history by recognizing multiple narratives and acknowledging diversity, analyzing geographic and economic impacts over time, and evaluating significant events, ideas, beliefs, and themes to identify trends and make connections. Distinguished learners are well prepared to analyze information, develop claims, and use evidence to communicate conclusions.

Level 3 Proficient Learners: *Proficient learners* demonstrate proficiency in applying critical thinking to understand the historical development of the United States and its relationship to the present. Learners at this level demonstrate proficiency in inquiring about history by recognizing multiple narratives and acknowledging diversity, analyzing geographic and economic impacts over time, and evaluating significant events, ideas, beliefs, and themes to identify trends and make connections. Proficient learners are prepared to analyze information, develop claims, and use evidence to communicate conclusions.

Level 2 Developing Learners: *Developing learners* demonstrate partial proficiency in applying critical thinking to understand the historical development of the United States and its relationship to the present. Learners at this level need additional academic support to inquire about history by recognizing multiple narratives and acknowledging diversity, analyzing geographic and economic impacts over time, and evaluating significant events, ideas, beliefs, and themes to identify trends and make connections. Developing learners need additional academic support to analyze information, develop claims, and use evidence to communicate conclusions.

Level 1 Beginning Learners: *Beginning learners* do not yet demonstrate proficiency in applying critical thinking to understand the historical development of the United States and its relationship to the present. Learners at this level need substantial academic support to inquire about history by recognizing multiple narratives and acknowledging diversity, analyzing geographic and economic impacts over time, and evaluating significant events, ideas, beliefs, and themes to identify trends and make connections. Beginning learners need substantial additional academic support to analyze information, develop claims, and use evidence to communicate conclusions.

2.1.4 General Description of Individual Student Reports

A. Identification Information

An Individual Student Report lists the student's name, date of birth, state student ID, grade level when assessed, LEA name, school name, and state. The grade level when assessed is also shown in a box on the left side of the report.

B. Description of Report

The description of the report provides the grade level/course assessed, content area assessed, and assessment year. It also provides a general overview of the assessment and score report.

C. How to Use the Report

This section provides guidance on how parents/caregivers can use the report to start a discussion with their student's teacher(s). It is important for parents/caregivers and educators to have regular check-ins to ensure students are learning the necessary skills to stay on track. Parents/Caregivers can use the information in the report to understand their student's strengths and needs and to work with educators to identify resources to support his or her education.

2.1.5 Overall Assessment Scores

D. Overall Scale Score and Performance Level

This section of the report provides the student's overall scale score and performance level (refer to Section 2.1). Students receive an overall scale score and based on that score, are placed in one of four performance levels, with Level 4 indicating a Distinguished Learner and Level 1 indicating a Beginning Learner.

E. Graphical Representation of Overall Performance: Overall Scale Score and Performance Level

This graphic provides an illustration of the four performance levels and where the student's overall scale score is positioned along the performance scale. The student's score is indicated by the black triangle positioned along the range of overall scale scores that define each performance level. The ranges of overall scale scores are indicated underneath the graphic.

F. Average of School, LEA, State

The average overall scale scores of the school, LEA, and state are shown below the overall scale score and performance level graphic. This allows for comparing a student's overall scale score to the average overall scale score of students at the school, LEA, and state level for the same grade level.

G. Percentage of Students at Each Performance Level

This section provides a bar graph showing the percentage of students within the state who performed at each of the four performance levels.

2.1.6 Performance by Reporting Category

H. Standards of Social Studies 8 Reporting Categories

The report shows the student's performance on the six Maryland State Social Studies Standards: Civics, Peoples of the Nations and World, Geography, Economics, History, and Skills and Processes.

I. Standards of Social Studies 8 Reporting Categories

Student performance for each standard is represented by a graphic and includes a description of the student's performance in that category.

- **A completely filled in circle** for the specified standard indicates the student as a "Distinguished Learner" or "Proficient Learner".
- **A half filled in circle** for the specified standard indicates the student as a "Developing Learner".
- **An empty circle** for the specified standard indicates the student as a "Beginning Learner".

J. Social Studies 8 Performance Level Descriptions

The report provides the performance level descriptions for the MCAP Social Studies 8 assessment.