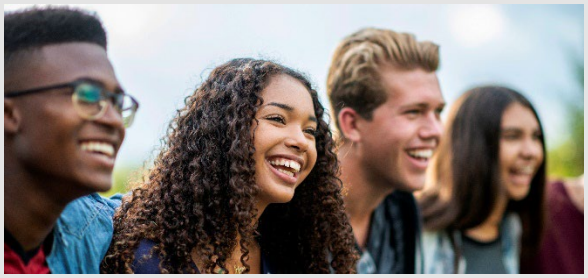
# ACT High School Assessments

## 2026-27 Information for Families

## What are the ACT High School Assessments?



ACT, Inc. has provided testing services for more than 50 years. Their assessments have evolved to reflect the nation's view of education to embrace lifelong learning and prepare students to be college and career ready after high school graduation. The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) contracted with ACT, Inc. starting with the 2014-15 fiscal year to comprehensively assess Wisconsin high school students:

- 9th and 10th grade students will take the **PreACT Secure** assessment in the spring.
- 11th grade students will take **The ACT®** with writing in the spring.

**The PreACT Secure**

PreACT Secure is multiple-choice and assesses student readiness in English, Mathematics, Reading and Science.

**The ACT® with writing**

The ACT with writing consists of four multiple-choice tests: English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science; and a 40-minute essay test that measures student writing skills.

## How are the test results used?

All students in grades 9-11 will be given these assessments except for approximately 1% of students with significant cognitive disabilities who will be tested with an alternate assessment. This system of assessments will allow teachers to measure a student's growth throughout high school.

DPI will also use The ACT® with writing for the high school accountability measure in order to determine the extent to which schools and districts across the state meet proficiency standards.

## What type of scores will be provided?

**PreACT Secure** scores are reported on a two-digit scale, 1 to 35. These scores will predict future ACT scores.

**The ACT ® with writing** scores range from 1 to 36 for each of the subtests and one overall score called a composite. Students will also receive a writing score ranging from 2 to 12. Scores can be used by students for college admission, scholarships, course placement,

and NCAA eligibility. Students have the option to send their scores to up to four colleges free of charge, complete a voluntary pre-test survey, and opt-in to having ACT provide their information to colleges, universities, financial aid and scholarship agencies, and organizations that provide educational programs.

Each ACT and PreACT Secure score will fall in one of four Wisconsin performance levels which defines the student's understanding and ability to apply grade-level knowledge and skills. For more information on Wisconsin performance levels, visit:

- The PreACT Secure Data and Results webpage - https://dpi.wi.gov/assessment/PreACT/data
- The ACT Data and Results webpage - https://dpi.wi.gov/assessment/act/data

## What learning standards do the ACT High School Assessments measure?

ACT and DPI work together to ensure that the ACT assessments measure what students have learned through the Wisconsin Academic Standards. Students taught to the Wisconsin Academic Standards should be well prepared to be successful with the ACT assessments.

The Wisconsin Academic Standards define the knowledge and skills students should take away from their K-12 schooling to be successfully prepared for postsecondary and career opportunities. The Wisconsin Academic Standards are available at http://dpi.wi.gov/standards.

## Where can I find sample or practice test questions?

Practice tests and sample test questions are available from ACT. Actual test questions are not released.

- **PreACT Secure**: https://dpi.wi.gov/assessment/PreACT/practice-test
- **The ACT®** with writing practice tests and sample writing prompts: https://dpi.wi.gov/assessment/act/practice-test

For more information about PreACT Secure visit https://dpi.wi.gov/assessment/PreACT.

For more information about The ACT visit https://dpi.wi.gov/assessment/act.

Questions may be directed to the Office of Educational Accountability at osamail@dpi.wi.gov.

ACT® WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF Public Instruction PreACT® Secure™