

# ACT High School Assessments

## 2021-22 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 **ACT Aspire®** assessment in the spring.
- 11th grade students will take **The ACT®** with writing in the spring.

#### The ACT Aspire®

ACT Aspire assesses student readiness in English, mathematics, reading, science, and writing.

#### 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?

**ACT Aspire®** scores are reported on a three-digit scale. 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 score will fall in one of four Wisconsin performance levels:

- **Advanced** – Student demonstrates **thorough** understanding of and ability to apply the knowledge and skills for their grade level that are associated with college content-readiness.
- **Proficient** – Student demonstrates **adequate** understanding of and ability to apply the knowledge and skills for their grade level that are associated with college content-readiness.
- **Basic** – Student demonstrates **partial** understanding of and ability to apply the knowledge and skills for their grade level that are associated with college content-readiness.
- **Below Basic** – Student demonstrates **minimal** understanding of and ability to apply the knowledge and skills for their grade level that are associated with college content-readiness.

## 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.

- **ACT Aspire®:**  
<https://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/act-aspire/about-act-aspire/exemplar-items.html>
  - **The ACT® with writing practice test:**  
<http://www.act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/Preparing-for-the-ACT.pdf>
  - **The ACT® sample writing prompts:**  
<http://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act/test-preparation/writing-sample-essays.html>
- **Preparing for The ACT® Test Taken Online:**  
<https://www.act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/Preparing-for-Online.pdf>

For more information about the ACT High School Assessments contact the Office of Educational Accountability at [osamail@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:osamail@dpi.wi.gov) or visit <https://dpi.wi.gov/assessment/act/high-school-assessments>.

