

Minnesota
Profile of State High School Exit Exam Policies

<i>State exit exam policy</i>	All students in Minnesota must pass all parts of the Graduation Required Assessments for Diploma (GRAD) in order to receive a high school diploma.
Type of test	The state considers the GRAD tests to be comprehensive proficiency assessments of the skills and knowledge in mathematics, reading, and writing that are necessary for graduation. The Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments, Series II (MCA-II), into which the GRAD tests are embedded, measure competency on a larger set of Minnesota academic standards.
Purpose	The purpose of the exam is to determine the knowledge and skills of high school graduates relative to those needed for entry-level employment and to meet a state mandate.
Major changes in exit exam policy since the 2009-10 school year for financial reasons	None
Major changes in exit exam policy since the 2009-10 school year for <i>other</i> reasons	Changed test vendor from Pearson to American Institutes for Research beginning with November 2011 GRAD retests
Year first administered	The written composition GRAD replaced the written composition Basic Skills Test (BST) in 2007; the reading MCA-II/GRAD replaced the reading BST in 2008; and the mathematics MCA-II/GRAD replaced the mathematics BST in 2009. The class of 2010 was the first class required to pass the GRAD tests.
Year diplomas first withheld	Beginning in 2010, diplomas were withheld for students who did not pass the reading and written composition GRAD tests.
Subjects tested on exam	Mathematics, reading, and written composition
Subjects required for graduation	Mathematics, reading, and written composition Since no legislation was passed in the 2010 session that affected the GRAD in math or any other subject area, the current statute remains. The statute states that students who enter

	grade 8 after the 2009-10 school year will be required to pass the GRAD math if no other legislation is passed.
Grade exam first administered	The written composition GRAD is first given in grade 9. The reading MCA-II/GRAD is first given in grade 10 and the mathematics MCA-II/GRAD in grade 11. Only the GRAD component of these tests is given for the retests.
Grade(s) exam aligned to	GRAD/MCA-II tests are aligned to the high school standards for reading, mathematics, and written composition, as defined in the test specifications.
Number of retakes allowed <i>before</i> the end of grade 12	The written composition GRAD is given three times a year, in November, April, and July. The GRAD component of the MCA-II/GRAD tests is available for students every other month starting in September 2008 for reading and July 2009 for mathematics.
Number of retakes allowed <i>after</i> grade 12	Students who meet all other graduation requirements except passing the GRAD test can retake an exam an unlimited number of times after 12 th grade.
Is the exit exam used for No Child Left Behind (NCLB) accountability purposes?	Yes
Is the same cut score used for graduation and NCLB accountability purposes?	No. For accountability in reading and mathematics under NCLB, students must reach the proficient level on the MCA-II. Students can meet the graduation requirement, however, by performing successfully on just the subset of questions on the MCA-II that makes up the GRAD component. A standard-setting session for establishing cut scores for the GRAD was conducted each year a new GRAD test was given (2008 for reading and 2009 for mathematics). Students can meet graduation requirements by scoring high enough on the GRAD, even when they do not achieve the proficient level on the MCA-II, which is needed for NCLB. In the standards-setting activity for 2008, the cut score for reading was established at a level comparable to NCLB proficiency. The math GRAD cut score was established through a standard-setting activity in 2009. This GRAD cut score is a separate cut score, and is below the

	<p>NCLB proficiency cut score.</p> <p>See document at: MN Standard Setting</p>
<p>Considerations given to changing the cut score needed to pass the exam for graduation purposes in the past year</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Alternate paths to graduation for students other than English language learners (ELLs) or students with disabilities</p>	<p>Yes-an alternate pathway is provided whereby students who attempt the Mathematics GRAD 3 times and receive subsequent district-prescribed remediation are considered to have met the requirement in mathematics.</p>
<p>Determination of eligibility to pursue these alternate paths to graduation</p>	<p>Students who entered grade 8 prior to the 2009-10 school year have an alternate pathway to satisfying the math GRAD requirement: those who attempt and fail the math GRAD three times and subsequently receive school-determined remediation are granted a pass via this alternate pathway.</p>
<p>Number and percentage of students who used alternate paths in the 2010-11 school year</p>	<p>Minnesota does not have accurate enough data to report this statistic.</p>
<p>Alternate paths to graduation specifically for English language learners</p>	<p>English language learners may be exempt from passing the GRAD if they have been in the country for fewer than four consecutive years. See the rule at https://www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/rules/?id=3501 (near the bottom of the page).</p> <p>For more information, go to http://education.state.mn.us/mdeprod/groups/Assessment/documents/Manual/035664.pdf Chapter 5 of this document (beginning on page 39) describes the available accommodations and procedures for determination.</p>
<p>Number and percentage of ELL students using alternate paths in the 2010-11 school year</p>	<p>Minnesota does not have accurate enough data to report this statistic.</p>

Alternate paths to graduation specifically for students with disabilities	<p>Minnesota statute describes in part the alternate pathway available for students with disabilities. See https://www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/statutes/?id=120B.30</p> <p>See also the rule at https://www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/rules/?id=3501 (near the bottom of the page).</p> <p>For more information, go to http://education.state.mn.us/mdeprod/groups/Assessment/documents/Manual/035664.pdf Chapter 5 of this document (beginning on page 31) describes the available accommodations and procedures for determination.</p>
Number and percentage of students with disabilities using alternate paths in the 2010-11 school year	Minnesota does not have accurate enough data to report this statistic.
Is the exit exam used by postsecondary institutions for undergraduate admission purposes?	No
Is the exit exam used by postsecondary institutions for placement purposes?	No
Are students who meet a certain standard on the state exit exam granted exemptions on college placement exams?	No
Can students receive any form of postsecondary education course credit for their performance on the exit exam?	No
Access to initial and cumulative pass rates on high school exit exams	Link to GRAD Pass Rates

State participation in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS)	Minnesota has adopted the CCSS in English language arts only
CCSS testing consortia membership	Minnesota is a member of neither state consortium.
Impact of adoption of the CCSS on high school exit exam policies	Not applicable
Plans to replace or realign current exit exam in English language arts with a new assessment aligned to the CCSS	Not applicable
Plans to replace or realign current exit exam in math with a new assessment aligned to the CCSS	Not applicable
Plans to maintain current exit exams in subjects other than English language arts and math once the Common Core State Standards are fully implemented	Not applicable
Will changes in state exit exams mentioned above make the exams more rigorous, less rigorous, or about the same?	Not applicable
Preparation for students and teachers to transition to new exam	Not applicable