

# Maryland High School Assessments (HSA)

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TECHNOLOGY GUIDELINES

2021-2022 School Year



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### Version Control

Version	Date	Author	Change Description
1.0	7/6/2021	eMetric	Created support documentation per 2021-2022 requirements discussion with Cognia and MSDE.
1.1	11/8/2021	eMetric	Updated supported systems.

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## INTRODUCTION

There are two components of the Maryland High School Assessments online testing system: the **HSA Portal**, used by school and LEA administrators, and the **HSA Kiosk**, used by students for testing. The specifications for each component are explained below. If you have questions about these technology specifications, please contact the Cognia Service Desk toll-free at: (866) 207-8804 or email at [HSAhelpdesk@cognia.org](mailto:HSAhelpdesk@cognia.org).

### HSA PORTAL: BROWSER SPECIFICATIONS

The HSA Portal is accessible via the following browsers on desktops and laptops:

- Chrome™ 94 or newer
- Firefox® 93 or newer
- Microsoft Edge™ 94 or newer
- Safari® 14 or newer

Administrators may access the HSA Portal at any time during the administration.

For more information on working with the HSA Portal, see the *HSA Portal User Guide*, which is available on the HSA Help & Support page: <https://maryland.onlinehelp.cognia.org>.

### HSA KIOSK: STUDENT TEST DEVICE SPECIFICATIONS

Students may test on a device provided it meets the specifications provided in Table 1. A few important notes are included below:

- Students testing on devices that do not meet the Student Test Device Specifications are likely to encounter performance-related issues during testing.
- The HSA Kiosk identifies third party applications that may cause interruptions during online test administration. Users will be required to close these prior to logging into the kiosk. There may be additional third-party applications not currently identified by the kiosk that can cause interruptions or interfere with the secure kiosk functionality. To minimize potential security issues and interruptions introduced by these applications, we recommend disabling such third-party applications from the devices prior to conducting the operational test.
- The practice test can be tested on the HSA Kiosk or on a browser. If the student will require the use of text-to-speech for the practice test, they must test using the HSA Kiosk. If using the kiosk, launch the kiosk and click on the “Access the Practice Test” link on the sign in screen. All operational tests must be tested on the HSA Kiosk.
- If a Chromebook™ was manufactured 2017 or later, it will not work in kiosk mode unless it is managed by an administrator. To run the Chromebook™ in kiosk mode, you will need a Chrome management license.

Table 1. Student Testing Interface Specifications

<b>System Requirements – All Hardware</b>	
Connectivity	Student devices must be able to connect to the internet via wired or wireless networks
Screen Size	9.7” screen size or larger/ “10-inch class” tablets or larger
Screen Resolution	1024 x 768 or larger
<b>Browser Requirements</b>	
Browsers <sup>a</sup> (Used for Practice Test Only)	Chrome™ 94 or newer Firefox® 93 or newer Microsoft Edge™ 94 or newer Safari® 14 or newer
<b>Desktop and Laptop Specific Requirements</b>	
CPU	1.3 GHz
Memory	2 GB (4 GB is strongly recommended for best performance)
Windows®	Windows® 8.1, 10 <sup>b</sup>
macOS®	10.14 – 11.6 (64-bit only)
Linux®	Fedora™ 27 (64-bit only)
<b>Tablet and Chromebook Specific Requirements</b>	
iOS® and iPadOS	13.1 – 15.1
Chromebook™	Chrome OS™ 80 – 94

*Note: Android devices will not be supported. As new operating system and browser versions are released, eMetric will update technology guidelines following successful compatibility testing. Windows is a registered trademark of Microsoft Corporation. Firefox is a registered trademark of the Mozilla Foundation. Safari, Mac, and iPad are registered trademarks of Apple Inc. Chrome and Chromebook are registered trademarks of Google Inc. Fedora is a trademark of Red Hat, Inc. Linux is the registered trademark of Linus Torvalds in the U.S. and other countries.*

<sup>a</sup> Text-to-speech on browsers is partially supported.

<sup>b</sup> Only in desktop mode. Windows 10 S is not supported.

Table 2 includes a list of the embedded online tools available to all students. For an explanation of how to use each tool within the HSA Kiosk, please see the *HSA Kiosk User Guide* available on the Help & Support page: <https://maryland.onlinehelp.cognia.org>.

Also included in the table is a list of the accessibility features and accommodations available to specific students who have the accessibility feature or accommodation ordered for them through the pre-ID file. This is not an exhaustive list of the accessibility features and accommodations available for students, but rather a list of the accessibility features or accommodations that require specific support from the HSA Kiosk. Color contrast, ASL video, and text-to-speech are accommodations embedded within the HSA Kiosk. The other accommodations listed require the accommodated form be assigned to the student, but have no functionality embedded within the HSA Kiosk. For a complete list of accommodations available to students, please see the *HSA Portal Help Guide* available on the Help & Support page: <https://maryland.onlinehelp.cognia.org>.

*Table 2. Accessibility Features and Accommodations (available on all devices except where noted)*

Accessibility Features for All Students	Accommodations & Accessibility Features Identified in Advance
Magnification	Color Contrast
Line Reader	ASL Video
Sketch & Highlight	Text-to-Speech <sup>a</sup>
Notepad	Refreshable Braille Display
General Masking	Assistive Technology Screen Reader
References	Assistive Technology Non-Screen Reader
Answer Eliminator	Closed Captioning
Answer Masking	Braille Response: Braille Writer
	Braille Response: Braille Notetaker
	Human Signer
	Human Reader
	Allow Accessibility Mode Testing

<sup>a</sup> Text-to-speech is not supported on Linux operating systems

## iTESTER AND 3<sup>RD</sup> PARTY ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

iTester provides a rich suite of accessibility and accommodations features within the testing platform to assist students with special needs. Several external third-party accessibility hardware solutions and Microsoft Windows-based accessibility applications are also supported by iTester. Test coordinators should ensure the “Allow Accessibility Mode” (AAM) accommodation is turned on for all students who will require Windows-based third-party accessibility software. Note that this is only available in the Windows iTester Kiosk application. Owing to iTester’s secure kiosk feature and variability among assistive technologies, some assistive technology software *may not be* compatible with iTester, even with the “Allow Accessibility Mode Testing” accommodation activated. Some assistive software, including commonly used screen readers, *do not require AAM* to be used within the kiosk. Prior to operational testing, test coordinators must:

1. Ensure the student's assistive technology will work with iTester,
2. Determine whether the AAM accommodation must be activated to use the assistive technology, and
3. Provide the student an opportunity to practice using the assistive technology with the iTester Kiosk.

If the preferred third-party assistive technology does not work well with the iTester Kiosk Allow Accessibility Mode on, then consider using the third-party software on an external stand-alone device and transcribing the student’s answers into iTester in accordance with your state’s transcription policy. Allow Accessibility Mode reduces kiosk security controls to allow third-party software to operate in conjunction with the kiosk. If AAM is used, proctors should closely monitor students testing with this accommodation to ensure test security is not compromised.

iTester is developed in compliance with the World Wide Web Consortium’s (W3C) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, Level AA for optimal compatibility with assistive technology products and features. As part of this effort, eMetric utilizes the W3C’s Accessible Rich Internet Application (ARIA) recommendation to improve the interaction between assistive technology and the testing platform. Any assistive technology products should comply with the User Agent Accessibility Guidelines (UAAG) and support the ARIA recommendation for the best user experience.

Some test content, such as Technology Enhanced Items, may not be fully WCAG compatible. Depending upon the test content provider and your state’s accessibility and accommodations policy, an alternate form or paper test may be required.

## HSA KIOSK DOWNLOAD AND INSTALLATION

The HSA Kiosk will be available for download on October 12, 2020.

### WINDOWS USERS

The HSA Kiosk for Windows will be made available for download via the HSA Portal. If your school uses Windows PCs, you will need to download and install the HSA Kiosk. Step-by-step instructions for installing the HSA Kiosk can be found in the HSA Kiosk Installation Guide available on the Help & Support page: <https://maryland.onlinehelp.cognia.org>.

### MAC USERS

The HSA Kiosk for Mac will be made available for download via the HSA Portal. If your school uses Mac, you will need to download and install the HSA Kiosk. Step-by-step instructions for installing the HSA Kiosk can be found in the HSA Kiosk Installation Guide available on the Help & Support page: <https://maryland.onlinehelp.cognia.org>.

### LINUX USERS

The HSA Kiosk for Linux will be made available for download via the HSA Portal. If your school uses Linux workstations, you will need to download and install the HSA Kiosk. Step-by-step instructions for installing the HSA kiosk can be found in the HSA Kiosk Installation Guide available on the Help & Support page: <https://maryland.onlinehelp.cognia.org>. Remember that Linux cannot be used with TestMonitor and does not support text-to-speech.

### CHROMEBOOK USERS

The HSA Chromebook app will be made available, if your school uses Chromebooks you will need to download it from the Chrome Web Store. Step-by-step instructions for installing the HSA kiosk app can be found in the HSA Kiosk Installation Guide available on the Help & Support page: <https://maryland.onlinehelp.cognia.org>.

**Note:** Any unmanaged Chromebooks released 2017 or later will not have the ability to test in kiosk mode. To run Chromebooks released after 2017 in kiosk mode, you will need a Chrome Management License. For more information, please follow the link listed below: <https://support.google.com/chromebook/answer/3134673?hl=en>

### iPAD USERS

The iTester app will be made available via the Apple iTunes App Store. If your building uses iPads for testing the single instance iTester app will need to be downloaded from the Apple iTunes App Store. Step-by-step instructions for installing the HSA kiosk app can be found in the HSA Kiosk Installation Guide available on the Help & Support page: <https://maryland.onlinehelp.cognia.org>.





**Remember to conduct the Site Readiness Test on all device configurations regardless of the HSA Kiosk or HSA app being used. See the HSA Portal Help Guide for additional information on the Help & Support site: <https://maryland.onlinehelp.cognia.org>.**

#### iTESTER TESTMONITOR

The iTester platform, called the HSA Kiosk in Maryland, has been fine-tuned to account for a host of unique technology environments and constraints that exist in many schools, iTester's design ensures a seamless testing experience for all students, despite bandwidth limitations. To account for the extreme conditions that exist in some schools, iTester offers an optional caching module. The caching module helps to alleviate bandwidth issues in extreme, sub-par network conditions by utilizing the local network which translates into substantially lower downstream usage of the external internet connection.

Please note the HSA Kiosk for Linux is not compatible with TestMonitor. Schools or LEAs using Linux operating systems will not be able to use TestMonitor.

For TestMonitor requirements and installation, please refer to the *TestMonitor Installation Guide* located on the HSA Help & Support site: <https://maryland.onlinehelp.cognia.org>.