



# Parent Guide to Interpreting the Government Reports

---

COGNIA/MSDE

# Table of Contents

<b>1.0 General Information for Parents and Educators.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background .....	1
1.2 Government.....	1
1.3 Confidentiality of Reporting Results .....	2
1.4 Purpose of this Guide .....	2
<b>2.0 Understanding the Government Individual Student Report (ISR).....</b>	<b>3</b>
2.1 Types of Scores on the Government ISR .....	3
<b>3.0 Sample Report.....</b>	<b>5</b>
3.1 Sample Government Individual Student Report.....	5
3.2 Description of Individual Student Reports .....	7

# 1.0 General Information for Parents and Educators

## 1.1 Background

The Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program (MCAP) encompasses all state and federally mandated assessments in English Language Arts/Literacy, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, WIDA ACCESS for ELs, and Kindergarten Readiness. It provides information to educators, parents, and the public on student progress toward proficiency on the Maryland state content standards. Maryland also provides Alternate Assessments written to the Alternate Standards for those students who require this accommodation.

## 1.2 Government

The Government Assessment is an end of course assessment (EOC) that comprises 20 percent of the student's grade in that course. Starting in the 2023–2024 school year with the ninth-grade cohort, students will have the Government EOC count as 20 percent of their final grade. The cohort is a group of students who are in the same grade in a given year.

	9th graders	10th graders	11th graders	12th graders
2023–2024	EOC = 20% of course grade	EOC is participation only	EOC is participation only	EOC is participation only
2024–2025	EOC = 20% of course grade	EOC = 20% of course grade	EOC is participation only	EOC is participation only
2025–2026	EOC = 20% of course grade	EOC = 20% of course grade	EOC = 20% of course grade	EOC is participation only
2026–2027	EOC = 20% of course grade	EOC = 20% of course grade	EOC = 20% of course grade	EOC = 20% of course grade

By the 2026–2027 school year, all 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grade students will have the EOC count as 20% of their EOC course's final grade. Local Education Agencies (LEAs) determine their own curricular course sequence and local grading policies. More information on the EOC assessments can be found at the following link: [marylandpublicschools.org/about/Pages/DAAIT/Assessment/EOCs/index.aspx](https://marylandpublicschools.org/about/Pages/DAAIT/Assessment/EOCs/index.aspx).

More information on the Government Assessment can be found at the following links: [marylandpublicschools.org/about/Pages/DCAA/Social-Studies/AGHSH.aspx](https://marylandpublicschools.org/about/Pages/DCAA/Social-Studies/AGHSH.aspx) and [marylandpublicschools.org/about/Pages/DAAIT/Assessment/MCAP/SocialStudies.aspx](https://marylandpublicschools.org/about/Pages/DAAIT/Assessment/MCAP/SocialStudies.aspx).

## 1.3 Confidentiality of Reporting Results

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) requires that access to individual student information be restricted to the student, their parents/caregivers, and authorized school personnel.

## 1.4 Purpose of this Guide

This guide provides information on the individual student reports provided for Government results.

The sample report included in this guide is for illustration purposes only. It is provided to show the basic layout of the reports and the information they provide. The sample report does not include actual data from any administration.

# 2.0 Understanding the Government Individual Student Report (ISR)

---

## 2.1 Types of Scores on the Government ISR

Student performance on the Government assessment is described on the individual student report using scale scores, and performance levels. State, Local Education Agency (LEA), and school average results are included in relevant sections of the report to help parents understand how their student's performance compares to that of other students. In some instances, a dash (-) appears 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. The scale score of the government assessment ranges from 240 to 650. For each test administration, the assessment is built with a consistent distribution of questions across each of the standards. Scores are converted from a raw score into a scale score. The conversion of a raw score to a scale score helps provide a more precise measurement of a student's achievement and also assures that tests given at different times are comparable. Questions are weighted in terms of difficulty and other psychometric criteria.

Therefore, a student who earns an overall scale score of 450 on one form of the Government assessment would be expected to earn an overall scale score of 450 on any other form of the Government test. 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. The overall scale score for the MCAP Government assessment determines a student's performance level.

### 2.1.2 Performance Level

Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs) describe the knowledge and skills that students should be able to demonstrate at each performance level. For school year 2022–2023 and beyond, Government has changed from reporting two performance levels to four performance levels to better align with the end of course model. 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 course. Each performance level is defined by a range of overall scale scores for the assessment. There are four performance levels for the Government assessment:

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

### **2.1.3 End of Course and Exam Grade Conversion Scores**

The MCAP Government EOC assessment is content specific and is required to be taken at the conclusion of the high school American Government course. MSDE has developed a psychometric approach for reporting that classifies scale scores into one of four performance levels. The scale scores are also transformed into grade conversion scale (GCS) scores, which range from 0 to 100. GCS scores are classified into letter grade equivalents (i.e., A, B, C, D, or F). MSDE developed a lookup table that contains the Performance Level Labels, the scale score ranges for each performance level, and the grade conversion score and associated letter grade equivalents. Beginning in 2023–2024, the grade conversion score will be included as 20% of a student’s final grade.

# 3.0 Sample Report

## 3.1 Sample Government Individual Student Report



**Student Name:** PREFERRED100 M. LASTNAME100  
**SASID:** D00100 **LEA Name:** Demonstration District A  
**Date of Birth:** 07/26/2009 **School Name:** Demonstration School 2  
**Administration:** WINTER 2025 **Grade:** 09

### B American Government Assessment Report, 2024-2025

This report shows whether PREFERRED100 demonstrated proficiency in American Government. The **American Government end of course (EOC) assessment** comprises 20% of your child's final grade in their government course. In order to satisfy the government graduation requirement, a student must pass the American Government course and take the MCAP government assessment or a department approved assessment.

#### What are the learning outcomes and assessment limits for the MCAP government?

Learn more about the Maryland's American Government program:  
<https://www.marylandpublicschools.org/about/Pages/DAAIT/Assessment/HSA/index.aspx>

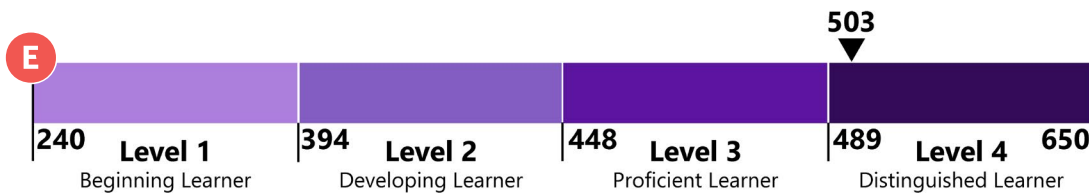


PERFORMANCE LEVEL	SCALE SCORE
<b>LEVEL 4 DISTINGUISHED LEARNER</b>	<b>503</b>

#### How did PREFERRED100 perform overall?

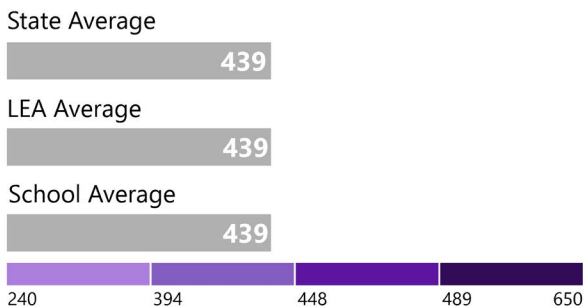
##### OVERALL STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Your student scored **503** on a scale of **240-650**, and performed at **LEVEL 4 - DISTINGUISHED LEARNER**.



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

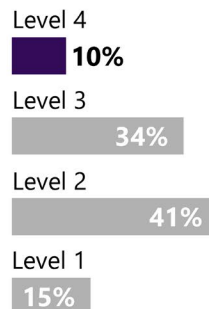
### F School, LEA\*, and State Comparisons



\* Please note that LEA stands for Local Education Agency.

### G How Students in Maryland Performed

Percentage of students at each performance level



**H**  
on next page

**I**  
on next page



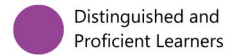
## How Did Your Child Perform in the Maryland State Standards for American Government?

Civics	Your student performed about the same as students who <b>demonstrate proficiency</b> . Students <b>are prepared</b> to demonstrate 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 students who <b>demonstrate proficiency</b> . Students <b>are prepared</b> to demonstrate 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 students who <b>demonstrate proficiency</b> . Students <b>are prepared</b> to demonstrate 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 students who <b>demonstrate proficiency</b> . Students <b>are prepared</b> to demonstrate 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.
Skills and Processes	Your student performed about the same as students who <b>demonstrate proficiency</b> . Students <b>are prepared</b> to inquire 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 child performed about the same as:



## Government Reporting Performance Level Descriptions

### Level 4: Distinguished Learners

**Distinguished learners** *demonstrate advanced proficiency* in their understanding and ability to apply knowledge and skills about the structure and functions of United States' government and politics, and how the United States government has maintained a balance between protecting rights and maintaining order. Distinguished learners demonstrate an advanced proficiency in their understanding and ability to apply knowledge and skills about US politics and government in world affairs, the ability to analyze the relationship of geographic factors in the development of government policy, and the economic principles, institutions, and processes required to formulate government policy. Distinguished learners are well prepared in the knowledge and skills to evaluate sources and use evidence and communicate and critique conclusions.

### Level 3: Proficient Learners

**Proficient learners** *demonstrate proficiency* in their understanding and ability to apply knowledge and skills about the structure and functions of United States' government and politics, and how the United States government has maintained a balance between protecting rights and maintaining order. Proficient learners demonstrate proficiency in their understanding and ability to apply knowledge and skills about US politics and government in world affairs, the ability to analyze the relationship of geographic factors in the development of government policy, and the economic principles, institutions, and processes required to formulate government policy. Proficient learners are prepared in the knowledge and skills to evaluate sources and use evidence and communicate and critique conclusions.

### Level 2: Developing Learners

**Developing learners** *demonstrate partial proficiency* in their understanding and ability to apply knowledge and skills about the structure and functions of United States' government and politics, and how the United States government has maintained a balance between protecting rights and maintaining order. Developing learners demonstrate partial proficiency in their understanding and ability to apply knowledge and skills about US politics and government in world affairs, the ability to analyze the relationship of geographic factors in the development of government policy, and the economic principles, institutions, and processes required to formulate government policy. Developing learners can also demonstrate partial proficiency in the knowledge and skills to evaluate sources and use evidence and communicate and critique conclusions. Developing learners need additional academic support to ensure that they can demonstrate proficiency in the knowledge and skills to evaluate sources and use evidence and communicate and critique conclusions.

### Level 1: Beginning Learners

**Beginning learners** *do not yet demonstrate proficiency* in their understanding and ability to apply knowledge and skills about the structure and functions of United States' government and politics, and how the United States government has maintained a balance between protecting rights and maintaining order. Beginning learners do not yet demonstrate proficiency in their understanding and ability to apply knowledge and skills about US politics and government in world affairs, the ability to analyze the relationship of geographic factors in the development of government policy, and the economic principles, institutions, and processes required to formulate government policy. Beginning learners need substantial academic support in building knowledge and skills to evaluate sources and use evidence and communicate and critique conclusions.



## 3.2 Description of Individual Student Reports

### 3.2.1 General Information

#### **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.

#### **B Description of Report**

The description of the report provides the content area (American Government) assessed and assessment year. It also provides a general overview of the assessment and score report.

#### **C Learning Outcomes and Assessment Limits for MCAP Government**

This section provides links to additional resources including the American Government standards and framework, assessment limits, and sample test items.

### 3.2.2 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. Students receive an overall scale score and, based on that score, are placed in one of four performance levels, with Level 4 indicating the student is a distinguished learner, Level 3 indicating the student is a proficient learner, Level 2 indicating the student is a developing learner, and Level 1 indicating the student is 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, and Cross-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 levels for the same grade level/course and content area.

#### **G Percentage of Students at Each Performance Level**

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

#### **H Performance by Standard**

This section provides the student's performance on each of the Government standards. For Government, there are five reporting categories that align to the Maryland social studies standards: Civics (1.0), Peoples of the Nation and World (2.0), Geography (3.0), Economics (4.0), and Skills and Processes (6.0). Each category has a circle that indicates the performance level of the specific social studies standard. The four main performance levels are used for the reporting of each standard. Levels 3 (Proficient) and 4 (Distinguished) have been combined for reporting purposes.

Performance Level Labels	Circle Indicator
Distinguished Learners and Proficient Learners	
Developing Learners	
Beginning Learners	

### **I** Performance Level Descriptions

Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs) describe the knowledge and skills that students should be able to demonstrate at each performance level in each content area, and at each grade level/course.



---

**cognia.org**