

## **Mississippi Statewide Assessment System 2008-2009**

The primary purposes of the Mississippi Statewide Assessment System are to provide information needed for state-level decisions about the effectiveness of instructional programs in local school districts and to provide districts with information to be used in improving instruction. The Mississippi Statewide Assessment System promotes instructional improvement in classrooms throughout the state and provides valid, reliable data for accountability purposes in compliance with MS Code 37-16-1, SB 2156, SB 2488, and the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*.

The objectives of this program include the following: assistance in the identification of educational needs at the state, district, and school levels; assessing how well districts and schools are meeting state goals and academic growth standards; providing information to aid in the development of policy issues and concerns; providing a basis for comparison of school, district, and state performance; and producing data which can be used to aid in the identification of exceptional educational programs or processes.

**Mississippi Curriculum Test, Second Edition** The Mississippi Curriculum Test, Second Edition (MCT2) was designed to measure student performance in reading/language arts and mathematics in grades 3 through 8 and consists of customized criterion-referenced reading/language arts and mathematics. The MCT2 is based on the *2006 Mississippi Language Arts Framework, Revised* and the *2007 Mississippi Mathematics Framework, Revised*, which define what students are expected to know and be able to do and are the basis for teacher instruction. Mississippi teachers reviewed all test items and established the performance level standards. These assessments allow Mississippi to be in compliance with the requirements of the *No Child Left Behind (NCLB)* federal legislation. The MCT2 was used for holding schools accountable for state academic achievement or the academic growth (improvement) of students as well as for the computation of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Results from the MCT2 provide information that can be used for the purpose of improving instruction and accelerating student achievement. Pearson Educational Measurement is the contractor for the MCT2.

**Grades 4 and 7 Writing Assessments** The writing assessments measure student performance in on-demand writing. The Grades 4 and 7 Writing Assessments were administered in March 2009 under the Mississippi Writing Assessment Program for Grades 4, 7, and 10. These writing assessments ask students in grades 4 and 7 to respond to their choice of two prompts designed to elicit narrative, informative, or persuasive responses. This assessment is aligned to the *2006 Mississippi Language Arts Framework, Revised*, and Mississippi teachers developed and field tested prompts to be used for the operational assessment. Mississippi teachers also revised the rubric previously used in order, improving the clarity of the language to better support classroom instruction; the revised rubric was used to score student responses from the March 2009 administration.

**Elementary and Middle Grades Science Assessments** The Elementary and Middle Grades Science Assessments are criterion-referenced assessments in grades 5 and 8 that allow Mississippi to be in full compliance with the requirements of the federal legislation under *No Child Left Behind*. These assessments are fully customized criterion-referenced tests, and a committee of Mississippi teachers selected by the MDE approved the items that appear on these tests. The tests are aligned with the grade-appropriate objectives in the *Mississippi Curriculum Science Framework 2001* as specified by teacher committees and will meet the requirements of *NCLB*. The results of these assessments provide information that can be used for the purpose of improving student achievement; the results are not currently used in Mississippi's school accountability system. Riverside Publishing is the contractor for the Elementary and Middle Grades Science Assessments.

**Subject Area Testing Program** The Subject Area Testing Program (SATP) consists of end-of-course, criterion-referenced tests in Algebra I, Biology I, English II, and U.S. History from 1877. The tests for Algebra I, Biology I, and U.S. History contain multiple-choice items. The test for English II consists of two components: a multiple-choice test and a writing assessment. The English II Multiple-choice Test and the Algebra I Test are based upon the *2006 Mississippi Language Arts Framework, Revised* and the *2007 Mississippi Mathematics Framework, Revised*, respectively. The SATP provides a meaningful assessment of secondary academic content tied to the state's content standards and promotes instructional strategies integrating both content and problem solving. All Subject Area Tests count for graduation; however, the tests required for graduation are determined by the year the student entered the ninth grade. The Subject Area Tests are used for holding schools accountable for academic achievement, the academic growth (improvement) of students, and for the computation of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Pearson Educational Measurement is the contractor for the SATP.

**MAAECF** The Mississippi Alternate Assessment of the Extended Curriculum Frameworks is an assessment for students with significant cognitive disabilities and is designed to assess the educational performance of these students who cannot meaningfully take the Mississippi Curriculum Tests, Mississippi Science Tests, or Mississippi Subject Area Tests, even with accommodations. Students in grades 3-8 and 12 who meet the state's definition of significant cognitive disabilities (SCD) and three additional criteria (MAAECF Participation Checklist) are eligible to participate in the MAAECF. In general, eligible students are those who have a history of requiring extensive individualized instruction and have been classified as being severely to profoundly cognitively disabled or experience a pervasive developmental disability. The MAAECF is designed to test grade spans 3-5, 6-8, and high school in the areas of language arts and math as well science in grade 5, in grade 8, and in high school. The assessment is a portfolio submission that is aligned to the Mississippi Extended Curriculum Frameworks (MECF). Necessarily, because the MAAECF is used to assess SCD students, the portfolios are highly individualized; however, certain objectives at each grade level in each content area are required. The results of the MAAECF are used for the state Achievement model and for reporting Adequate Yearly Progress.

**WIDA ACCESS** In October of 2008, the Mississippi Department of Education entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System on behalf of the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Wisconsin Center for Education Research (WCER) to join the Wisconsin Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Consortium. The MDE has adopted the *World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA)-ACCESS Placement Test (W-APT)* to help determine eligibility for placement in the LEA's English language instruction educational program. The WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test (W-APT) is an assessment tool used by educators to measure the English language proficiency of students who have recently arrived in the U.S. or in a particular district. By joining the WIDA consortium, Mississippi also adopted the WIDA English Language Proficiency (ELP) Standards and evaluation services that are designed to assess the progress of children in attaining English proficiency, including a child's level of comprehension in the four recognized domains of speaking, listening, reading, and writing and are aligned with the WIDA ELP standards. The WIDA English Language Proficiency Standards include the four recognized domains of speaking, listening, reading, and writing and are based on the academic language content of PreK-12 students.

**Children's Progress Academic Assessment (CPAA)** During the 2007 session, the Mississippi Legislature passed House Bill 1058 establishing section 37-23-16 of the Mississippi Code which requires the State Department of Education to implement early literacy and numeracy screening assessment instruments. Requirements under the law direct the Department of Education to establish a reporting system for school districts in order to monitor and report on the effectiveness of the literacy or numeracy screening assessment instruments. Through a Request for Proposals and

evaluation process, Children's Progress was selected to be the screening instrument, and a phase-in plan was designed for approximately 20% of school districts to implement the assessment in 2008-09, 60% in 2009-10, and 100% in 2010-11. The CPAA is a computer-delivered formative assessment that works within a Response to Intervention (RTI) framework to be used for universal screening and progress monitoring. The CPAA contains three distinct item banks (fall, winter, spring) that allow assessments three times during the school year with increasing content difficulty and expectations throughout the year. The adaptive approach of CPAA provides scaffolding after incorrect responses and identifies the child's zone of proximal development across a range of concepts (i.e., what a child can do independently versus what the child can do with assistance). Due to the implementation schedule, the schools using the CPAA in 2008-2009 gave only spring assessment, but schools using the CPAA in 2009-10 will administer all three assessments: fall, winter, and spring. The data from 2009-10 will allow the MDE to explore the articulation between the CPAA and the Mississippi Curriculum Test, Second Edition (MCT2). Additionally, the CPAA will also help identify students who may need a more intensive instructional program because they have characteristics of dyslexia.