Have you ever wondered why students are given so many types of tests in school? You’re not alone. Just like each subject provides students with different content and information, each type of assessment measures student learning in different ways for different purposes.

For example:

Formative Assessment is a process used by classroom teachers and students on a regular basis to confirm, adjust, and support teaching and learning.

Interim or Benchmark Assessments are given to students multiple times throughout the school year to monitor student learning toward meeting learning goals over time.

Summative Assessments are given at the end of a learning cycle to certify that learning has occurred. End-of-chapter tests are one example of summative tests given at a local level. State and federal law require all students be tested in specific grades and subjects once a year to measure student progress in learning state content standards or other career- or college-ready goals. Our elementary and middle school assessment is called the Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress or M-STEP. Students in grade 8 also take the PSAT™ 8/9. The Michigan Merit Exam, or MME, is the state high school exam. Some students with disabilities take an alternative state assessment called MI-Access; English language learners are given an assessment called WIDA. Schools also have the option to use Michigan’s Early Literacy and Mathematics Benchmark Assessment in grades K-2.

Reporting Assessment Results
A Parent Report of your child’s assessment results is available from his or her school each fall. Statewide assessment results are reported at MI School Data through the state’s new Parent Dashboard for School Transparency. In addition to test scores, the Dashboard (www.mischooldata.org/parentdashboard) is filled with important school-level information that parents and others say they want to know about Michigan public schools, including charter schools.

Families and others can use the Dashboard to get a more complete picture of how their child’s school is serving students. They also can use the Dashboard to compare a school’s performance with the average performance of other similar Michigan schools. Your ideas can make the Parent Dashboard even better! Send feedback to MDE-ParentDashboard@michigan.gov.

Where to Find Assessment Resources
To provide parents with information on student testing, state assessments, and how you can help your child prepare, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) has developed several print and video communication tools (see back page for descriptions).

You can find parent resources on the following pages:
M-STEP web page (www.michigan.gov/mstep)
PSAT web page (www.michigan.gov/psat)
MME web page (www.michigan.gov/mme)
MI-Access web page (www.michigan.gov/MI-Access)
Early Literacy and Mathematics Benchmark web page (www.michigan.gov/earlylitandmath)
WIDA web page (www.michigan.gov/wida)
Assessment Print Materials

Student Testing
What Parents Can Do to Help Students Prepare

As a parent and your child’s first teacher, you can help your child understand and prepare for the assessments they will take in school. Here are some points that will help your child perform their best:

- **Prepare for the First Day**
  - Help your child to be prepared for the first day of school by having them get plenty of sleep and wake up early.

- **Learn about the Assessments**
  - Discuss with your child what the assessments are, what they will cover, and why they are important.

- **Encourage Practice at Home**
  - Use practice materials and online resources to help your child prepare for the assessments.

- **Stay Informed**
  - Keep track of important dates and deadlines and stay informed about the assessments through your child's school.

- **Supportive Environment**
  - Create a supportive and encouraging environment for your child, especially as test day approaches.

- **Healthy Habits**
  - Ensure your child gets enough sleep, eats a nutritious meal, and exercises regularly to help them perform their best.

Assessment Videos

The following videos can be found on YouTube (www.youtube.com/user/michdepted) choose “Assessment” playlist, or click on the pictures to open each video.

State assessment overview, features, student test time, testing dates... and more.

For Parents of Students in Grades 3-8

How to Read Your Child’s Score Report

How to Read Your Child’s Score Report

Michigan’s Early Literacy and Mathematics Benchmark Assessment

Assessment Videos

Spring M-STEP video featuring computer adaptive testing

M-STEP: What students can expect when taking the test

Michigan’s Early Literacy and Mathematics Benchmark Assessment

Assessment Online Practice Tools for Students

Online practice for selected State tests

These and other tools are available on each State assessment web page, which can be accessed through the OEAA Student Assessment page (www.michigan.gov/OEAA).