

All statewide assessments to be administered this school year

MDE Communications News Release
 JACKSON, Miss. — All required federal and statewide assessments will be administered to public-school students this school year, including the 3rd Grade Reading Assessment and high school assessments for Algebra I, English II, Biology and U.S. History.

The Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) has provided districts with pandemic-related flexibilities to make it easier to administer the assessments and to schedule in-person testing for

virtual learners. Schools are expected to provide safe testing accommodations to full-time virtual learners who are able to go to their school campus to test. Virtual learners are strongly urged to be tested, though schools cannot require students to show up for testing. “The assessments identify students’ strengths and areas for improvement to ensure they are on track for the next grade and eventually, college and career,” said Dr. Carey Wright, state superintendent of education. “This year’s statewide assessments will

provide valuable information about the impact of COVID-19 on learning and will help identify where accelerated learning opportunities for students are most needed.”

Current 3rd graders are not required to meet a passing score on the reading assessment to be promoted to 4th grade for the 2021-22 school year. Students still must meet all other district requirements for promotion.

This school year, high school students who take required end-of-course high school assessments including Algebra I, English II, Biology and U.S. History are not required to meet a passing score to meet high school graduation requirements. Students must meet all other state and district requirements to graduate.

MSU retains COVID-19 safety protocols through current semester

Press Release
 STARKVILLE, Miss.— Mississippi State University will maintain COVID-19 safety protocols through the end of the Spring 2021 semester, including current mask, physical distancing and sanitation requirements.

“It’s important to note that these protocols have been effective for more than a year now in keeping our campus community and guests safe,” said MSU President Mark E. Keenum. “While great progress has been made and our numbers are trending substantially down, we are not yet past this public health threat. We believe that it is prudent to keep basic safety protocols in place through the end of this semester.”

Keenum said the university’s leadership team would “evaluate our situation at the end of the semester and hopefully be able to relax restrictions as vaccination rates rise and COVID-19 case rates continue to decline.”

On Tuesday [March 2], MSU Athletics announced plans for athletic events after Mississippi Gov. Tate Reeves’ latest Executive Order relaxed some statewide restrictions. Keenum said the MSU Division of Student Affairs, the Division of Academic Affairs and other major campus entities would soon share additional information regarding future operating guidelines in response to the Governor’s Executive Order.

Keenum reiterated that at this time, MSU plans for in-person Spring Commencement activities under certain COVID-19 guidelines and that plans for the Fall 2021 semester include in-person classes and a return to pre-COVID-19 campus operating guidelines.

“The prevalence of multiple COVID-19 vaccines and current trends in our state offer us both hope and metrics for returning our campus to normal operations, which is the goal of our students, faculty and staff,” said Keenum. “I thank our Bulldog family

for their efforts to keep the campus community safe, and I encourage them to continue these efforts through the end of this semester so that we don’t sacrifice the safety we’ve achieved thus far together.”

Follow MSU’s COVID-19 guidance and evolving information at www.msstate.edu/covid19.

MSU is Mississippi’s leading university, available online at www.msstate.edu.

HEAD WARMERS

By Linda K. Palmer

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