



## **Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests – Modified (CRCT-M) Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is the purpose of the CRCT-M program?**

Like the CRCT, the CRCT-M program is designed to measure how well students acquire the skills and knowledge described in the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS). The CRCT-M program has been developed for those students with disabilities who are receiving special education services and whose Individualized Education Program (IEP) documents that they would be best assessed through an alternate assessment based on modified academic achievement standards. Like the CRCT, the CRCT-M is designed to measure how well a student has acquired the knowledge and skills covered in the GPS for his or her grade level. Information from the test is used to identify individual student strengths and weaknesses and to gauge the quality of education throughout Georgia.

### **What grades and content area are assessed with the CRCT-M?**

The CRCT-M is offered in grades 3 through 8 in reading, English language arts, and mathematics.

### **Why was the CRCT-M created?**

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), also known as NCLB, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) require states to ensure that all students have access to a general curriculum based on challenging standards and take statewide assessments. In 2007, the U.S. Department of Education allowed states the option to create alternate assessments for a small group of students receiving special education services who can make academic progress within the grade-level curriculum, but may not be able to reach grade-level proficiency within the school year because of their disability. The CRCT-M is designed for those students who have struggled to show what they have learned on the general assessment (such as the CRCT) because of their disability.

### **Who determines that a student will take the CRCT-M?**

The student's Individualized Educational Program (IEP) team determines the state-mandated test to be taken by the student. The IEP team will use the CRCT-M eligibility criteria developed by Georgia educators to determine if the CRCT-M is appropriate for the student. This determination is made by subject or content area. The IEP team must carefully consider how the student's disability interacts with each content area and whether the disability precludes the student from demonstrating grade-level proficiency rather than some other mitigating factor. In addition, a student must be receiving instruction based on the GPS for the grade level in which he/she is enrolled and his/her IEP must include goals that support the student's access to and progress in the subject area curriculum standards.

### **Which students are eligible to participate on the CRCT-M?**

Only students with disabilities who are receiving special education services and who meet very specific criteria are eligible to take the CRCT-M. Using the participation guidelines, the IEP team must consider the student's individual strengths, needs, previous and current achievement information, and the student's instructional program. While the majority of students will take the general CRCT, with or without accommodations, the CRCT-M is appropriate for a small number of students with disabilities. The eligibility guidelines are posted to the CRCT-M web page on the department's website: [www.gadoe.org](http://www.gadoe.org).

It is essential to note that students who achieved a proficient score (met or exceeded expectations) on a subject area CRCT the previous school year are not eligible to participate in the CRCT-M in that subject. These students have demonstrated they are able to achieve grade-level proficiency on the general assessment, and therefore, an alternate assessment would not be appropriate.

### **Is an eligible student assessed in all subjects by the CRCT-M?**

No, not necessarily. A student must be evaluated by his/her IEP team for each subject area to determine his/her eligibility for the CRCT-M. Many students may be eligible for the CRCT-M in only one subject area. For example, a student may have a disability that interacts with a subject area, such as mathematics. This interaction may impede the student's rate of learning in that subject, as well as his or her ability to demonstrate what he or she has learned as a result of instruction. Such a student may be eligible to participate in the CRCT-M in the affected subject but may not be eligible for other subjects.

The CRCT-M program is only available in grades 3 through 8 in reading, English language arts, and mathematics. This means all students must take the CRCT in science and social studies.

### **Will the accommodations currently provided on the CRCT be available for the CRCT-M?**

Yes, the same accommodations allowed on the CRCT will also be available on the CRCT-M. The student's IEP team determines the accommodations that are needed for classroom instruction and for participating in assessments.

### **Will there be retests for CRCT-M?**

Yes, a retest administration for the CRCT-M will be available for key grades and content areas. Georgia requires third-grade students demonstrate proficiency on the reading portion of the CRCT (or CRCT-M) in order to be considered for promotion to the next grade. Fifth-grade and eighth-grade students are required to demonstrate proficiency on both the reading and mathematics CRCT (or CRCT-M) in order to be promoted to the next respective grade level. Students who fail to achieve proficiency must be offered remediation and a retest. A retest is available for both tests (CRCT and CRCT-M) in these grades and content areas. For students with disabilities, the IEP team will make the final grade-placement decision.

## **Can students switch from the CRCT to the CRCT-M in a single year?**

In general, students should retest on the same test taken during the main administration. The placement decision is an annual decision and reflects multiple criteria. Importantly, the CRCT-M eligibility criteria require that the evidence be cumulative and include more than performance on the end of year summative test. The student's instructional program is an important consideration and given the nature of the assessment, with embedded information, students who tested on the CRCT will likely be unfamiliar with the format of the CRCT-M. For this reason, it is recommended that students retest on the same test taken during the main administration and any alternate placement decision, if needed, be considered for the next school year.

## **How does the CRCT-M differ from the CRCT?**

The CRCT-M has been designed to be more accessible for those students who have struggled to show what they have learned on the general assessment. Special education teachers led the development of the CRCT-M, recommending test item enhancements and test design features. The enhancements and features are similar to the types of instructional strategies teachers use in their classrooms on a regular basis.

### **Test Design Features**

- The CRCT-M has fewer test items.
- The size of the print is larger.
- Fewer items appear on each page.
- Items are placed in a single-column.
- Items that test the same content are grouped together (e.g, fraction items are grouped together).

### **Test Item Enhancements**

- Key words may be **bolded**, *italicized*, or appear in all CAPS to help students focus on important information.
- Hint boxes have been added to some items. These hints are designed to serve as helpful reminders, providing information to aid students in understanding what the question is asking.
- Graphic organizers (visual aids that help) accompany some items.
- Extraneous information has been deleted when appropriate.
- Simplified sentence structure and vocabulary is used when appropriate.

## **How does the CRCT-M impact AYP?**

Any student who meets all the eligibility requirements for CRCT-M may participate in this assessment option. However, in compliance with federal regulations, no more than two percent (2%) of the tested population in grades 3 – 8 may contribute as proficient in the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) calculations for each content area.

## **How will the 2% be calculated for the CRCT-M?**

The calculation will be made using the number of Full Academic Year (FAY) students in the eligible grades for which the CRCT-M is offered (grades 3 – 8). Importantly, the calculation is

made by content area as different students may participate in different content areas based on their individual needs.

- Calculations are made at the district level.
- The 2% calculation is based on the number of enrolled students in grades 3 – 8 at the time of testing.
- Eligibility guidelines must be followed – only eligible students may participate in the CRCT-M.

### **What happens if a district has more than 2% proficient based on the CRCT-M?**

Similar to the 1%, districts may assess more than 2% on the CRCT-M but only 2% may be included as proficient in AYP calculations for each content area. Unlike the 1%, there is no waiver process for systems that exceed 2%.

Federal regulations require that if more than 2% are proficient in a content area, the overage must be included as not-proficient in AYP calculations. A procedure to identify the number of students who must be reassigned for AYP purposes is in development but it is anticipated that systems will be asked to identify which students should contribute as not-proficient in AYP calculations. This process will likely occur during Assessment Processing at the end of the school year and prior to the release of AYP. As more information becomes available, information will be shared.

Reassignment of proficient scores to not-proficient is mandated for AYP calculations only and should not impact student-level decisions such as grade promotion.

### **How does the 2% for CRCT-M relate to the 1% on Georgia Alternate Assessment (GAA)?**

A district may exceed the 2% only to the extent the district is under the 1%. For example, if a district assesses .8% on the GAA, the district may have 2.2% proficient on the CRCT-M.

A district may exceed 3% only if a waiver has been granted to exceed the 1%. For example, if a district has received a waiver to allow for 1.15% on the GAA, the district may have a total of 3.15% included in AYP calculations.

- Districts must continue to apply for 1% waivers.
- Federal regulations do not allow a waiver for 2%.