AzMERIT Information Sheet

AzMERIT is unique to Arizona.

AzMERIT has a test blueprint that was developed by Arizona and is different from any other state or consortium test blueprint. The first administration of AzMERIT includes test items from three previously existing item banks. Neither PARCC nor Smarter Balanced items are included in AzMERIT. All AzMERIT items were reviewed and approved by a committee of Arizona educators to confirm alignment and appropriateness for inclusion in the test. No students outside of Arizona will see the same selection of items included in the AzMERIT. An item development plan is in place so that all AzMERIT items will be Arizona owned and developed by spring 2017.

AzMERIT measures only academic performance.

AzMERIT measures a student’s proficiency in Arizona’s College and Career Ready Standards for English language arts and math. All of the test questions are aligned to the content standards for these subject areas. There are no items included in AzMERIT that measure behavioral, emotional, or other non-cognitive aspects.

AzMERIT computer-based test results will be comparable to the AzMERIT paper-based test results.

The State Board of Education required AzMERIT be available in both a computer-based format and a paper-based format and that test results be comparable regardless of the test format. AzMERIT was developed to specifically facilitate that comparability regardless of test format.

Depending on grade and content area, 84% to 100% of the test items on the computer-based test are the same as the test items on the paper-based test. Computer-based testing allows for the use of a variety of innovative items types. When an innovative item was not able to be translated to paper, it was replaced with a comparable more traditional item. To limit the number of items that required a replacement item on paper, the majority of test items on the AzMERIT tests are traditional multiple choice items.

In addition to developing AzMERIT so that the computer-based test and the paper-based test are as similar as possible, there will be a mode comparability study that will ensure reported results are comparable regardless of testing mode.
The limited student data associated with AzMERIT is secure.

The student data associated with AzMERIT records is the minimum data needed to ensure that test records are associated with the correct student and to ensure that AzMERIT items are fair.

AzMERIT records include the student’s name, date of birth, SAIS ID number, grade, school, and district. This information is needed to ensure the student’s family receives the correct test results and that only authorized personnel at the student’s school and district have access to the student’s results.

All AzMERIT items must be fair to all students regardless of their gender, ethnicity, English language proficiency or special education status, or socio-economic status. These demographic data elements are collected so that the appropriate analysis of the AzMERIT items can be completed to ensure that only fair items are included in the test. This analysis is done at an aggregated level; individual student names or other individually identifiable information is not included in this analysis.

The Arizona Department of Education (ADE) takes student data privacy very seriously. Detailed information about the types of student data ADE collects, how that data is used, and how that data is kept secure can be found online here: http://www.azed.gov/data/faq-data-collection-use-and-privacy/

ADE does not report any data to the federal government other than aggregate statewide assessment results.

AIR, the non-profit vendor for AzMERIT, must follow strict requirements to ensure student data security and privacy.