

## **End of Course Exam Grade Conversion Score – Sample Parent Letter**

Month Day, Year

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Maryland students participate in the Maryland Integrated Science Assessment (MISA) in grades 5, 8, and once in high school. MISA measures student learning and mastery of the Maryland Next Generation Science Standards. Results on MISA help schools improve instructional experiences for students in science. The United States Department of Education requires all students to be assessed once in to be assessed once in each grade span, including elementary, middle, and high school.

### **Background of the EOC Exam and COMAR Adoption**

On July 25, 2023, the Maryland State Board of Education adopted COMAR 13A.03.02 *Graduation Requirements for Public High Schools in Maryland* and 13A.03.04 *Test Administration and Data Reporting Policies and Procedures*. These changes to state regulations affect high school students pursuing credit for high school life science in the following ways:

- Beginning in school year (SY) 2023-2024, first-time ninth grade students who take a high school-level life science course are required to take the Life Science Maryland Integrated Science Assessment (LS MISA) end-of-course (EOC) exam.
- The LS MISA EOC exam will count for 20% of students' final course grade for their life science course.

The LS-MISA EOC exam is a state-administered high school assessment, incorporated into local education agency (LEA) life science courses as a final exam with a percentage counting towards the students' final course grade. The EOC exam serves as a transition away from non-course specific high-stakes exit assessments that require a passing score. The EOC exam assesses student proficiency solely for high school life science related standards. For more information and guidance regarding the EOC exams, please refer to the FAQ document [End of Course Assessment FAQ \(September 2023\)](#).

### **Grade Conversion Score (GCS) Model**

In order to convert students' assessment scores from the LS MISA into a grade, a GCS model was created. During the development of the model, the Maryland State Department of Education convened a grading policy workgroup, which provided the feedback and recommendations that have been incorporated into the GCS Model.

The resulting GCS model provides a rigorous assessment of student standards mastery and limits the negative impact on student. In the GCS model, the lowest grade conversion score on the EOC exam has been set at 50%. The output from the GCS model distributes grades comparably to the ways in which LEAs distribute A-D letter grades as student final course grades. The GCS model also allows students to maintain or increase their final course grade through performing well on the EOC exam and provides a rigorous test for high-achieving students.

**Grade Conversion Score (GCS) Table**

Letter Grade	GCS Range	LS MISA Scale Score Range
A	90 – 100	757 – 850
B	80 – 89	744 – 756
C	70 – 79	737 – 743
D	60 – 69	731 – 736
F	50 – 59	650 – 730

If you have any questions or concerns about the administration of high school EOC exams with your student, please feel free to contact XXX, XXX, at XXX.

Sincerely,

Name

Title