

**Skills Assessments for Incoming Freshmen  
for Mathematics, International Languages, and Visual & Performing Arts  
Maggie L. Walker Governor's School**

Skills Assessment Day Fast Facts:

**Sat, March 21, 2026**

Check in at 8:15 AM; Testing begins at 9:00 AM

At MLWGS: 1000 N. Lombardy St., Richmond

***Testing in Mathematics, French, Latin, and Spanish***

Remember:

- **ALL** incoming freshmen **MUST** take a **Mathematics** skills assessment.
- Language assessments are required **ONLY** for those wishing to register for a level **higher than Level I** in **French, Latin, or Spanish**.

*If you are unable to attend, please contact Ms. Kelly Ndayizigiye, the freshman class counselor, at [beadragon@gsgis.k12.va.us](mailto:beadragon@gsgis.k12.va.us).*

If your locality has informed you that you have been accepted to the Maggie L. Walker Governor's School, congratulations! We are thrilled to have you and confident that you will find your experience as a Green Dragon immensely rewarding. [Please be aware that all admissions decisions come directly from your city or county. To confirm whether you've been granted admission, check with your gifted coordinator.]

This packet may seem overwhelming, but it contains critical information about skills assessments for math, international languages, visual arts, and orchestra. It is imperative that you **read this information carefully** to determine what is relevant to you. Skills assessments for math and languages will take place **in person** on Saturday, March 21st (See details below). Orchestra and Visual arts skills assessment are virtual and should be arranged by email. Details are provided below. The deadlines for auditions or submission of any portfolios are: **Sat, April 18th, for Orchestra, and Sat, May 23rd, for Visual Arts**.

As a Green Dragon, you are expected to demonstrate the principle of honor. In this case, it means that **you may not receive help** on the skills assessments. Your performance should reflect your knowledge and demonstrate your skills. The results of the assessments will ensure that you are placed in the course(s) that will offer you the greatest opportunity for success.

For those who are unable to attend the March 21st assessment event, please contact Ms. Kelly Ndayizigiye ([beadragon@gsgis.k12.va.us](mailto:beadragon@gsgis.k12.va.us)) to arrange for assessment on the make-up date.

Again, we realize we have provided you with a lot of information to read, but this is a critical part of the process. Best wishes on your journey as a Green Dragon!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Connie Hill

Chair, Mathematics Department

Mr. Michael White

Chair, Department of International Languages

Coach Jeff Hall

Chair, Visual & Performing Arts Department

Below are the details of the Mathematics, Languages, and Arts assessments.

## Mathematics

**All incoming freshmen will complete the mathematics skills assessment specific to the course they wish to register for in the Fall.**

With students entering Maggie Walker from 14 divisions, these tests will provide us with useful information for differentiated instruction and appropriate class placement for students. Beginning at the Algebra 2 level, we offer Honors and Plus level classes. The majority of our incoming students will be enrolled in our Honors classes. The Plus level classes are for the students who are advanced mathematically and have a passion for mathematics. These classes are taught at a faster pace, with deeper analysis and extensions. Students are expected to master the material quickly. Please refer to the chart below for more details.

Honors	Honors Plus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <u>Reviews</u> previous concepts</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Assumes</b> mastery of previous concepts</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <u>Adjusts</u> pace to student need</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Student adjusts to <b>faster pace with more independent student learning</b></li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Focuses on conceptual understanding and skill development</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Focuses on conceptual understanding with <b>more depth and additional content</b></li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prepares for calculus (not including AP Calculus BC)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prepares for calculus, including <b>AP Calculus BC</b></li></ul>

Students who are interested in a Plus level class (Algebra 2 or Precalculus) should visit the mathematics table at registration night to see if they achieved at least the minimum score needed for placement and to receive a signature on their registration form. If a student is enrolling in Geometry or is not interested in a Plus level class, they do not need to acquire a signature for registration purposes.

The skills assessments are different for each math course. They may include multiple choice, true/false, and free response questions. You will be given 60 minutes to complete the skills assessment. **NO CALCULATORS OR OTHER TECHNOLOGY ARE PERMITTED and no other resources may be used.**

## International Languages

### Skills Assessments for Incoming Freshmen: The Class of 2030

The faculty of the Department of International Languages has designed skills assessments in **Chinese, French, Latin, and Spanish** to determine incoming freshmen's skills and content knowledge in each target language so that we may make our best recommendation to help you maximize your success at MLWGS. **Any rising freshman wishing to register for a level higher than Level I in any of these four languages must take a skills assessment.** A strong foundation will give you the best chance to achieve linguistic fluency and cultural understanding at the highest possible levels of your chosen language.

As future Dragons, you are expected to abide by our standards of honor when taking these skills assessments, which **prohibit the use of ALL outside resources, including online translators, artificial intelligence tools, dictionaries, materials received in previously-taken courses, or consultation with anyone.** The work you submit should be yours and yours alone. Remember: the goal of these skills assessments is to make an **authentic assessment** of your content-knowledge and skill in the target language so that we may **place you appropriately.** If you use outside resources, you are likely to find yourself placed in a level for which you are not prepared. This can have negative ripple effects that impair your chances of success for the rest of your high-school career. **If you cheat, you're only cheating yourself.**

Below you'll find information for each language and its skills assessment. All skills assessments in **French, Latin, and Spanish** will be conducted on **Saturday, March 21, 2026**, at Maggie Walker. All incoming freshmen are asked to **arrive between 8:15 and 8:30 AM**, take their Mathematics assessment at approximately 9:00 A.M. and then, after a break, take their 60-minute language assessment. Any students wishing to take a second language assessment will have to schedule that separately. (To do so, please contact Michael White, Chair of the Department of International Languages, at [mwhite@gsgis.k12.va.us](mailto:mwhite@gsgis.k12.va.us).) For the **Chinese** skills assessment, please contact Ms. Sharon Meng directly (see details below).

The tests for French, Latin, and Spanish have a time limit of **60 minutes**. (Actual testing time may be shorter.) All tests must be taken in one sitting in person at Maggie Walker, and you will not be given a second attempt.

**Freshman Registration will be held on Wednesday, April 8, at Maggie Walker, at 6:00 P.M.** The tests will have been assessed by that time, and you should have been informed via email of your assessment. (Teachers will be available in person on the 8th with your assessment information in case you didn't receive notification.) Parents choosing to override the department's recommendation should follow the instructions received in the email containing the assessment results.

**Any student who does not take the skills assessment will be required to enroll in their most recent language level and will not be permitted to register for the next sequential course for the 2026-27 academic year.**

*Please be advised that 1a and 1b are valued as one Carnegie credit. For example, if you took Spanish 1a as a 6<sup>th</sup> grader and Spanish 1b as a 7<sup>th</sup> grader, then Spanish II as an 8<sup>th</sup> grader, then you will likely aspire to enter Spanish III at MLWGS.*

**Chinese:**

- For all levels OTHER THAN Chinese I, contact Ms. Sharon Meng at smeng@gsgis.k12.va.us as soon as possible to arrange for your skills assessment. Chinese skills assessments will be conducted in person at Maggie Walker on **Monday-Tuesday, Mar. 23-24, from 1:00 PM to 2:00 PM**.
- Please note that, while MLWGS offers AP Chinese most years, the availability of this course depends partly on enrollment numbers. For that reason, the Department cannot guarantee that, if you choose Chinese as your four-year language **and** enter at a level higher than Chinese I, AP Chinese will be available during your senior year. We can guarantee that four years of study will be available to make Chinese your four-year language **ONLY** if you enter at Chinese I.

**French:**

- Incoming freshmen wishing to enter at level 2, 3, or 4 are required to take the skills assessment. Students will also be provided with a list of the skills covered in each level to compare what is covered in their current classes; students should consider this list carefully, as curricula can vary widely across counties and schools.

**Latin:**

- All incoming freshmen wishing to enter level 2, 3, 4, or Pre-AP are required to take the skills assessment. Latin 4 and Pre-AP are both level 4 courses, but Pre-AP is a prerequisite for AP Latin: Caesar & Vergil.

**Spanish:**

- Incoming freshmen wishing to enter Spanish 2, 3, 4, or Pre-AP are required to take the skills assessment. Spanish 4 and Pre-AP are both level 4 courses. However, students interested in taking AP Spanish during their sophomore year should take Pre-AP Spanish as freshmen. Spanish 4 students can still end up taking AP Spanish, but we recommend that those students enroll in Pre-AP during their sophomore year, followed by AP during their junior year. Students taking the skills assessment will be given the opportunity to indicate on the assessment which level they wish to be considered for.

If you have questions, please email Mr. Michael White, Chair of the Department of International Languages, at mwhite@gsgis.k12.va.us.

## Visual and Performing Arts

### Orchestra Audition

Orchestra students interested in auditioning for the **Advanced Level Orchestra** must contact the Orchestra Director, Mrs. Allison Barnes, no later than Saturday, April 18th, to be considered for the class. Only exceptionally strong applicants should apply. A middle school orchestra teacher recommendation and audition will be required. Please email Mrs. Barnes at [abarnes@gsgis.k12.va.us](mailto:abarnes@gsgis.k12.va.us) for more information.

### Band Audition

Currently, the MLWGS band program does not offer auditions. All incoming band students should sign up for **Intermediate Band**. Percussion students should sign up for Percussion Ensemble.

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### Art 2 Portfolio

Students who have taken "Art 1" in middle school should sign up for Art 2. No additional portfolio is required. **Note: Art 1 taken outside of MLWGS does not count as a Fine Arts credit requirement for graduation.**

Art 1 is the prerequisite for Art 2. The Art 1 curriculum covers specific art history, media skills, vocabulary, and other artistic concepts that a student must be capable of understanding and utilizing in their work. Without this prior training and confidence building, success in Art 2 and subsequent art classes could be compromised.

Additionally, students who have not completed an official Art 1 course may demonstrate equivalent knowledge and skills through independent study, advanced 8th grade coursework, private instruction, or other relevant experiences. A formal placement process is in place to evaluate these students and determine eligibility for direct enrollment in Art 2. In order for "non-sequential entry to Art 2" to be considered, the entry application (below) must be completed in full and submitted via email no later than May 24th.

**Until a final determination is made, students are asked to enroll in Art 1.** The application materials can be photographed and emailed to [jhall@gsgis.k12.va.us](mailto:jhall@gsgis.k12.va.us) in digital format with the subject line "Art 2 Portfolio." Based on the results of this assessment, the most appropriate placement for the applicant will be determined.

**\*\*\*Again, until a final determination is made, students are asked to enroll in Art 1. Once the application has been reviewed, I will communicate to the Counseling Dept. and request a transfer from Art 1 to Art 2.**

Thank you for your interest in the MLWGS Art Department! We look forward to having you join our amazing community of young artists. You can find out more about our program at [www.maggiwalkerarts.com](http://www.maggiwalkerarts.com).

## ART 2 APPLICATION

**Please submit an application for Art 2 ONLY if you have not completed Art 1 in middle school. Students who have already completed Art 1 should sign up for Art 2. No portfolio required.**

Please email **ALL** the following information and portfolio submissions to [jhall@gsgis.k12.va.us](mailto:jhall@gsgis.k12.va.us) by May 24.

### 1. STUDENT INFORMATION:

- Student name \_\_\_\_\_
- Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_
- Student email \_\_\_\_\_
- Parent name and email \_\_\_\_\_
- Home county \_\_\_\_\_
- Last art class taken & when \_\_\_\_\_
- Most recent art teacher \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. PORTFOLIO ENTRIES: Complete these activities, one per page, on 8.5" x 11" printer paper.

- Position your non-dominant hand palm up, fingers loosely bent; Draw your hand as accurately as possible using only contour lines with line quality.
- Arrange 3 - 5 small objects of different sizes/shapes/textures to create a dynamic composition; Draw the still life as realistically as possible using a full range of values.
- Ask someone to pose for you (standing); draw the model as proportionately as possible.
- Sit at the far end of a hallway; draw exactly what you see with careful attention to linear perspective.
- Using a color medium, paint, draw, or collage a subject of your choice using one of the following color schemes: analogous, split- complementary, or triadic.

Please email **ALL** the following information and portfolio submissions to [jhall@gsgis.k12.va.us](mailto:jhall@gsgis.k12.va.us) by May 24.

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