

2017 - 2018 Testing Schedule at Underwood School District #550, Underwood, MN

MCA TESTING Minnesota's statewide MCA tests, called the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments, are annual, summative measurements of student achievement that are used, along with many other school and classroom assessments, to evaluate student learning and skills. Specifically, the Minnesota statewide tests assess achievement of the Minnesota Academic Standards in mathematics, reading and science and language proficiency development for English learners. Some forms of other assessments occur on a daily basis, others occur at the end of a unit of instruction, and others at the end of a semester or course. Schools use the MCA's as objective, standardized assessments to validly measure students' learning against benchmarks of academic achievement.

3rd Math - March 22-23 9:00 - 11:00

3rd Reading - April 4, 5 9:00 - 11:00

4th Math - March 20-21 9:00 - 11:00

4th Reading - April 6, 9 9:00 - 11:00

5th Math - April 23, 24 during class time

5th Reading - March 27, 28, 29 during class time

5th Science - May 2, 3 during class time

6th Math - April 23, 24 during class time

6th Reading - March 27, 28, 29 during class time

7th Math - April 25, 26 during class time

7th Reading - April 27, 30, May 1 during class time

8th Math - April 25, 26 during class time

8th Reading - April 27, 30, May 1 during class time

8th Science MCA - May 7, 8, 9 during class time

10th Reading - April 16, 17, 18 during class time

10th Science - May 7, 8, 9 during class time

11th Math - April 10, 12 during class time

Most students take the MCA, but students who receive special education services and meet eligibility criteria may take the MTAS. These tests will be administered on the same days that their classmates are taking the MCA's.

ACCESS for ELL's are a requirement for students who are English Language Learners. They must be given to students in grades k - 12 from Jan 29 - March 24. The assessments were developed by the WIDA consortium and administered to measure progress toward meeting Minnesota's standards for English language development. English learners who received special education services and meet the participation guidelines may take the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs. Our students will take these tests on March 13, 14.

Individual student results from the MCA's, MTAS, and ACCESS for ELL's will be available for parents to pick up by the open house before the first day of school and will be sent home to parents/guardians no later than fall conferences. More information is available on the following pages.

The ASVAB is the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery that is given to all juniors at Underwood School. It is a career and vocational test with resources available for students to consider for personal career ideas. It will be held on Wednesday, Dec. 6th and goes from 8:30 - 12:00 noon. Results are interpreted for students as a class within a month after the administration. More information is available at <http://www.military.com/join-armed-forces/asvab>.

The PSAT is a "preliminary SAT test" as is an optional test for students in the 11th grade. It will be held on Wednesday, October 11, 2017. It is administered from 8:30 - 12:00 noon. This year it will be offered free as a special offer by the SAT company to Underwood students. The test is used to measure readiness for college, access scholarships, and practice for the SAT. Results are sent to the school and given to the students approximately 6 - 8 weeks after the test. More information is available at <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/about>.

The ACT Plus Writing will be an optional test for all juniors and any seniors who have not taken the test. It is a college entrance exam and is given at Underwood School on April 24, 2018. The state is providing this opportunity to students to take it during the day at our high school. The test will start at 8:30 and usually takes until 1:00. The test is free for those eligible for free and reduced meals. The local district will pay \$30 for other students, and the remainder of the fee, \$31.50, is due from the student. Results are mailed by ACT to each student's home approximately six weeks after the test administration. More information is available at <http://www.act.org>.

The NOCTI Basic Accounting test is used for students in a business class to meet the requirement for our Perkins funding. If it is needed this year the dates are approximately May 14, 15, 16 and will be taken during class. There is no cost for students. NOCTI is the largest provider of industry-based credentials and partner industry certifications for career and technical education (CTE) programs across the nation.

If you have any questions on testing and assessments, contact Anne Stenoien, the District Assessment Coordinator, 218-826-6101 ext 108 or by email at astenoien@underwood.k12.mn.us.



This document provides basic information to help parents/guardians make informed decisions that benefit their children, schools and communities.

Why statewide testing?

Minnesota values its educational system and the professionalism of its educators. Minnesota educators created the academic standards which are rigorous and prepare our students for career and college.

The statewide assessments are how we as a state measure that curriculum and daily instruction in our schools are being aligned to the academics standards, ensuring all students are being provided an equitable education. Statewide assessment results are just one tool to monitor that we are providing our children with the education that will ensure a strong workforce and knowledgeable citizens.

Why does participation matter?

A statewide assessment is just one measure of your student’s achievement, but your student’s participation is important to understand how effectively the education at your student’s school is aligned to the academic standards.

- Students who do not participate will receive a score of "not proficient."
- Students who receive a college-ready score on the high school MCA are not required to take a remedial, noncredit course at a Minnesota State college or university in the corresponding subject area.
- Educators and policy makers use information from assessments to make decisions about resources and support provided.
- Parents and the general public use assessment information to compare schools and make decisions about where to purchase a home or to enroll their children.
- School performance results that are publicly released and used by families and communities, are negatively impacted if students do not participate in assessments.

Academic Standards and Assessments

What are academic standards?

The *Minnesota K–12 Academic Standards* are the statewide expectations for student academic achievement. They identify the knowledge and skills that all students must achieve in a content area and are organized by grade level. School districts determine how students will meet the standards by developing courses and curriculum aligned to the academic standards.

What is the relationship between academic statewide assessments and the academic standards?

The statewide assessments in mathematics, reading, and science are used to measure whether students, and their school and district, are meeting the academic standards. Statewide assessments are one measure of how well students are doing on the content that is part of their daily instruction. It is also a measure of how well schools and districts are doing in aligning their curriculum and teaching the standards.

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) and Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS)

- Based on the Minnesota Academic Standards; given annually in grades 3-8 and in high school in reading and mathematics; given annually in grades 5, 8 and in high school for science.
- Majority of students take the MCA.
- MTAS is an option for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for English Learners

- Based on the WIDA English Language Development Standards.
- Given annually to English learners in grades K–12 in reading, writing, listening and speaking.
- Majority of English learners take ACCESS for ELLs.
- Alternate ACCESS for ELLs is an option for English learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

Why are these assessments effective?

Minnesota believes that in order to effectively measure what students are learning, testing needs to be more than answering multiple choice questions.

- To answer questions, students may need to type in answers, drag and drop images and words, or manipulate a graph or information.
- The reading and mathematics MCAs are adaptive, which means the answers a student provides determine the next questions the student will answer.
- The science MCA incorporates simulations, which require students to perform experiments in order to answer questions.

All of these provide students the opportunity to apply critical thinking needed for success in college and careers and show what they know and can do.

Because test content represents the academic standards as completely as possible, preparing for and taking the assessments uses the very same knowledge, processes and strategies included in the standards.

Are there limits on local testing?

As stated in 120B.301, for students in grades 1-6, the cumulative total amount of time spent taking locally adopted districtwide or schoolwide assessments must not exceed 10 hours per school year. For students in grades 7-12, the cumulative total amount of time spent taking locally adopted districtwide or schoolwide assessments must not exceed 11 hours per school year.

In an effort to encourage transparency, the statute also requires a district or charter school, before the first day of each school year, to publish on its website a comprehensive calendar of standardized tests to be administered in the district or charter school during that school year. The calendar must provide the rationale for administering each assessment and indicate whether the assessment is a local option or required by state or federal law.

What if I choose not to have my student participate?

Parents/guardians have a right to not have their student participate in state-required standardized assessments. Minnesota Statutes require the department to provide information about statewide assessments to parents/guardians and include a form to complete if they refuse to have their student participate. This form follows on the next page and includes an area to note the reason for the refusal to participate. Your student's district may require additional information.

A school or district may have additional consequences beyond those mentioned in this document for a student not participating in the state-required standardized assessments. There may also be consequences for not participating in assessments selected and administered at the local level. Please contact your school for more information regarding local decisions.

When do students take the assessments?

Each school sets their testing schedule within the state testing window. Contact your student's school for information on specific testing days.

- The MCA and MTAS testing window begins in March and ends in May.
- The ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs testing window begins at the end of January and ends in March.

When do I receive my student's results?

Each summer, individual student reports are sent to school districts and are provided to families no later than fall conferences. The reports can be used to see your child's progress and help guide future instruction.

How much time is spent on testing?

Statewide assessments are taken one time each year; the majority of students test online. On average, the amount of time spent taking statewide assessments is **less than 1 percent of instructional time** in a school year. The assessments are not timed and students can continue working as long as they need.

Why does it seem like my student is taking more tests?

The statewide required tests are limited to those outlined in this document. Many districts make local decisions to administer additional tests that the state does not require. Contact your district for more information.

Where do I get more information?

Students and families can find out more on our [Statewide Testing page](http://education.state.mn.us) (education.state.mn.us > Students and Families > Statewide Testing).



Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.31, subdivision 4a, requires the commissioner to create and publish a form for parents and guardians to complete if they refuse to have their student participate in state-required standardized assessments. Your student's district may require additional information. School districts must post this form on the district website and include it in district student handbooks.

Parent/Guardian Refusal for Student Participation in Statewide Assessments

To opt out of statewide assessments, the parent/guardian must complete this form and return it to the student's school.

To best support school district planning, please submit this form to the student's school no later than January 15 of the academic school year. For students who enroll after a statewide testing window begins, please submit the form within two weeks of enrollment. A new refusal form is required each year parents/guardians wish to opt the student out of statewide assessments.

Date _____ (This form is **only** applicable for the 20____ to 20____ school year.)

Student's Legal First Name _____ Student's Legal Middle Initial _____

Student's Legal Last Name _____ Student's Date of Birth _____

Student's District/School _____ Grade _____

Please initial to indicate you have received and reviewed information about statewide testing.

_____ I received information on statewide assessments and choose to opt my student out. MDE provides a *Parent/Guardian Guide to Statewide Testing* on the [MDE website](#) (Students and Families > Statewide Testing).

Reason for refusal:

Please indicate the statewide assessment(s) you are opting the student out of this school year:

_____ MCA/MTAS Reading

_____ MCA/MTAS Science

_____ MCA/MTAS Mathematics

_____ ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS for ELLs

Contact your school or district for the form to opt out of local assessments.

I understand that by signing this form, my student will receive a score of "not proficient" and he/she waives the opportunity to receive a college-ready score that could save time and money by not having to take remedial, noncredit courses at a Minnesota State college or university. My school and I may lose valuable information about how well my student is progressing academically. In addition, opting out may impact the school, district, and state's efforts to equitably distribute resources and support student learning.

Parent/Guardian Name (print) _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

To be completed by school or district staff only.

Student ID or MARSS Number _____