



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Why does my child take tests and which tests are given?

North Branch Area Public Schools is committed to providing the best possible education for every student. Tests are given for different reasons, depending on the need. Some tests are required by federal and/or state legislation. Some tests are required to measure English language proficiency. Some tests are given to measure progress to a learning goal. Some tests are used to monitor progress made during a period of time, to measure the impact of instruction. Some tests are used to select students to participate in educational programs or services. One test cannot fill all needs.

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

Required by the State of Minnesota to measure progress to MN Academic Standards and by federal legislation to comply with Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), part of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

Estimated Testing Times (times for online tests)

- MCA Reading, grades 3-8: 3-4 hours
- MCA Reading, grade 10: 2-3 hours
- MCA Math, grades 3-8: 2-3 hours
- MCA Math, grade 11: 2-3 hours
- MCA Science: 2 hours
- MTAS: Individualized
- For more information about state testing, go to [Minnesota Department of Education](#)
- For more information about MCA testing, please see this [document](#) from the Minnesota Department of Education.
- For more information about MTAS, please see this [document](#) from the Minnesota Department of Education

English Learners ACCESS for ELLs and Alternate ACCESS:

- Required by the State of Minnesota and federal legislation for all English Learners (ELs).
- These tests measure English proficiency in reading, writing, speaking, and listening and are usually administered during the months of February and March.
- For more information about ACCESS for ELLs and Alternate ACCESS, please see this [document](#) from the Minnesota Department of Education.
- Estimated testing time for ACCESS, Kdg: Individualized, approximately 1 hour
- Estimated testing time for ACCESS, Grades 1-12: 30-40 minutes per domain (listening, reading, speaking)
- Estimated testing time for ACCESS Writing, Grades 1-12: 65 minutes
- Estimated testing time for Alternate ACCESS: 20 minutes per domain

Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) and FastBridge (aReading and aMath):

- Online math and reading tests administered to all students in grades K-10 and students at-risk in 11 & 12.
- Students in K-6 take the FastBridge assessments - aReading & aMath
- Students in 7-10 and at-risk 11 & 12 take MAP.
- Estimated time per subject is approximately 1.5 hours for MAP Test and 45 minutes for FastBridge tests.
- Student performance is reported by achievement level and growth (national and state norms).
- Tests are adaptive, meaning that the items a student will see will adjust in difficulty based on a student's correct response.
- Tests can provide a direct link to instruction, allowing for more personalized learning opportunities.
- MAP tests are aligned with MN academic standards and are highly predictive of proficiency on MCAs.

When will I receive results for my child?

- For all state assessments, for 2016-2017 spring results, schools are required to distribute individual student reports by fall conferences. Contact your student's school for specific requests.
- [View a quick guide or tutorial video that explains MCA/MTAS individual student reports.](#)
- For MAP and FastBridge results, contact your child's teacher or school for results. Results are typically shared with parents at conference times and for student goal setting.

Is there an opt-out process?

Yes, parents who prefer to opt their child out of state and/or local testing may contact their principal to obtain an MDA Parent/Guardian Refusal for Statewide Assessment Form or click the link below. Please return this form to your principal. If you have questions regarding this form, contact Laurie Krenz, District Data & Assessment Specialist, at 674-1239 or lkrenz@isd138.org.

The form asks for a deadline of Jan.15, however we will accept the form until testing has begun.

[Parent/Guardian Refusal for Statewide Testing](#)