

Falcons Online Academy Student Handbook
2023-2024 School Year
Grades 7-12



Office & Attendance Line:
(507)333-6190
www.faribault.k12.mn.us/schools/foa

Mission Statement

“Falcons Online Academy serves and fosters a culture of belonging for all students. We equip our Falcons with the skills to pursue their unique path in the world to graduate college and career ready.”

Welcome

Welcome to Falcons Online Academy! We are honored that you have chosen to engage in your learning with us. Falcons Online Academy offers a personalized online learning option for 7-12 students through Faribault Public Schools. We are a fully accredited online provider through the Minnesota Department of Education for students in 7 - 12th grade. Students enrolled in our program will have access to:

- High-quality online curriculum that engages students
 - ◆ Instruction allows students to work at their own pace and follow their own plan
 - ◆ Access to curriculum 24:7 that is aligned to Minnesota academic standards
- Coaching and mentorship from Faribault Public Schools teachers who have training and experience teaching online
- Teacher support during online office hours
- More flexibility to balance school and other commitments
- Regular check-in with parents that promote parent/guardian involvement
- On-site staff to support students' academic, social and emotional needs

This school handbook is designed to be helpful in answering questions about our Falcons Online Academy program, policies and procedures. This handbook is not an all-inclusive list of rules, but an outline of expectations and procedures that assist in the operation of the school and promote a positive learning environment for ALL at Falcons Online Academy.

2023-2024 School Calendar - Important Dates

August 28th	FOA Open House
August 29th	First Day of School 7-12
September 2nd	Picture Day–FHS North Gym, 8:15-11:00am
September 4th	No School
October 13th	Picture Retakes–FHS North Gym, 8:15-10:00am
October 18th - 20th	No School - Fall Break
November 3rd	No School - Curriculum Day
November 22nd - 24th	No School - Thanksgiving Break
December 15th	No School
December 22nd - January 2nd	No School - Winter Break
January 15th	No School - MLK Jr. Day
January 18th	End of First Semester
January 19th	No School - Teacher Workday
February 9th	No School - Conferences 7:30 am-11:30 am
February 16th	No School
February 19th	No School - Curriculum Day
March 22nd	No School
March 25th - March 29th	No School - Spring Break
April 10th	No School
April 19th	No School
May 24th	Last Day for Seniors
May 27th	No School - Memorial Day
May 27th	Last Day of School
June 2nd	Graduation

School Calendar

Falcons Online Academy Staff

Online Learning Coordinator		
Joseph Timmer	(507)333-6293	jtimmer@faribault.k12.mn.us

Administrative Assistant & Attendance Line		
Kris Brazil	(507)333-6190	kbrazil@faribault.k12.mn.us

Online Learning Technology Support		
Stacy Messer	(507)333-6728	smesser@faribault.k12.mn.us

7-12 Partner Teachers			
Monica Chavis	English	(507)333-6318	mchavis@faribault.k12.mn.us
Nicholas Tackmann	Math	(507)333-6410	ntackmann@faribault.k12.mn.us
Chris Johnsrud	Science	(507 333-6350	cjohnsrud@faribault.k12.mn.us
Brian Meier	Social Studies	(507) 333-6364	bmeier@faribault.k12.mn.us
LuAnn Giles	Electives	(507) 333-6367	lgiles@faribault.k12.mn.us
Ryan Lueken	Physical Education/Health	(507)333-6407	rlueken@faribault.k12.mn.us
Jackie Jarvis	Art	(507) 333-6043	jjarvis@faribault.k12.mn.us

English Language Learner Support		
Kathryn Schultz	507-333-6018	Student Success Coordinator

Special Education		
Noah Moore	(507)333-6296	nmoore@faribault.k12.mn.us

Counselors		
Brent Hawkins • 6th Grade	(507)333-6300	bhawkins@faribault.k12.mn.us
Kyle Krzenski • 7th Grade	(507)333-6396	kkrzenski@faribault.k12.mn.us
New Counselor • 8th Grade	(507)333-6300	@faribault.k12.mn.us
Dawn Peanasky • 9-12, A-Di	(507)333-6200	dpeanasky@faribault.k12.mn.us
Lisa Lipins • 9-12, Dj-K	(507)333-6200	llipins@faribault.k12.mn.us
Faith Ahmed • 9-12, L-Q	(507)333-6300	fahmed@faribault.k12.mn.us
Michelle Breun • 9-12, R-Z	(507)333-6200	mbreun@faribault.k12.mn.us
Sheryl Borka • Social Worker	(507)333-6200	sborka@faribault.k12.mn.us

Middle School Social Worker		
Melissa Dobbs	(507)333-6300	mdobbs@faribault.k12.mn.us

Middle School Activities Director		
Brent Hawkins	(507)333-6300	bhawkins@faribault.k12.mn.us

High School Activities Director		
Shane Gunderson	(507)333-6210	sgunderson@faribault.k12.mn.us

General Student Information and Expectations

Falcons Online Academy students engage in a highly flexible and independent learning environment. With that in mind, students must make appropriate progress in their classes. Students should expect to work on school for 5-6 hours per day or at least 25-30 hours each week. Students should create a schedule and establish a routine that allows them to remain on

pace with their school work. Teachers and the FOA counselor are available to work with students in creating a schedule that works best for them.

Communication

Communication is an important part of an online learning program. We are committed to frequent and honest communication with students and families. Our commitments include:

- Students and families can expect a return email or phone call within 24 school business hours of reaching out to an FOA teacher, counselor, or other staff
- Students and families should respond to FOA communication (when necessary) within 24 school business hours
- Students should advocate for themselves when they need academic, scheduling, or counseling help

Attendance

The Faribault Public Schools (FPS) Board and all staff believe that school attendance is important. Educators and parents must work together to help our students be successful. By attending school consistently, students are more likely to read well by third grade, middle school students are better prepared to pass important courses, high school students stay on track for graduation and students are better prepared for college or workforce readiness.

A school absence may be excused when called into the Falcons Online Academy office by a parent or legal guardian. The absence must be reported to the attendance line at 507-333-6190 or kbrazil@faribault.k12.mn.us before 3:00 p.m. the day of absence. Falcons Online Academy reserves the right to request documentation for any absence and requires medical documentation for all absences longer than three days.

Who is required to attend school?

Minnesota law requires that every child between seven and 17 years of age must receive instruction (Minn. Stat. 120A.22, Subd 5). Once a child under the age of seven is enrolled in kindergarten or a higher grade in public school, the child is subject to compulsory attendance provisions.

Daily Attendance

Falcons Online Academy uses the Attendance Check-In system on Campus Student where it is each student's responsibility to verify your attendance/participation for the day. You will be required to respond to an attendance Check-In on the Today screen to show you are participating in online school. These Check-Ins will display once daily. You must "Check-In" between 12:01AM and 11:59PM each day. To respond to a Check-In, click on the Check-In on the Today screen and then click **Yes, I'm Here**.

[Click here for “Check-In Instructions”](#)

What is an excused absence? (per School Board policy 503)

An excused absence is any absence that is reported by a parent or guardian to be due to:

1. Medical Illness. *
2. Serious illness in the student’s immediate family.
3. A death or funeral in the student’s immediate family or of a close friend or relative.
4. Medical, dental, or orthodontic treatment, or a counseling appointment.
5. Court appearances occasioned by family or personal action.
6. Religious instruction: Not to exceed three hours in any week.
7. Physical emergency conditions such as: fire, flood, storm, inclement weather, etc.
8. Official school field trip or other school-sponsored outing.
9. Removal of a student pursuant to a suspension.
10. Family emergencies.
11. Active duty in any military branch in the United States
12. A student's condition that requires ongoing treatment for a mental health diagnosis.

*To be considered an excused absence, the student’s parent or legal guardian may be asked to verify, in writing, the reason for the student’s absence from school. A note from a physician or a licensed mental health professional stating that the student cannot attend school is a valid excuse.

What is an unexcused absence? (per School Board policy 503)

Any absence not meeting the criteria above will be considered "unexcused".

Extended Absences and Family Vacations

The school district encourages families to plan vacations when school is not in session. If a student needs to miss school because of a planned vacation, the planned absence should be communicated to the school ahead of time so teachers can inform students about instruction and assignments they will miss.

Students are expected to attend Falcons Online Academy while residing within the state of Minnesota. Students wanting to continue working while traveling outside Minnesota, and especially outside of the United States, may not be able to access their online work. Students and parents should be aware that according to Minnesota State Law, a student who is absent for fifteen (15) consecutive days must be withdrawn and must formally re enroll to be admitted to school (Minn. Stat. 126C.05, Subd. 08). This includes travel outside the state for 15 consecutive days. Students missing 15 consecutive days - even with prior notification to the district - will be dropped from enrollment per state statute. See below.

Consecutive absences

If a student misses fifteen (15) consecutive school days during the regular school year, without receiving instruction in the home or hospital setting, the School District must drop the student from its enrollment roll and classify the student as withdrawn. (Minn. Stat. 126C.05, Subd. 8). The School District may also be required to file an Educational Neglect or Truancy report with the student's county of residence.

What is truancy? (Minn. Stat. 260C.007, Subd 19)

“Habitual truant” means a child under the age of 17 years who is absent from school without excuse for seven school days if the child is in elementary school or for one or more class periods on seven school days if the child is in middle school or high school or a child who is 16 or 17 years of age who is absent from school for one or more class periods on seven school days and who has not lawfully withdrawn from school.

What is Educational Neglect?

Educational neglect refers to a child under the age of 12 years who is absent from school without excuse for more than seven school days and is in need of protection or services due to habitual truancy. For students under the age of 12 years, an absence from school without excuse is considered educational neglect by the parent rather than truancy by the child.

What is the procedure for chronic absenteeism?

A student will be considered to be consistently attending school if they attend more than 90 percent of school days. When a student drops below this level, the school may engage in any of the following actions:

- Phone calls/messages home
- Letters/support resources sent home
- Individual meeting with student and staff member from attendance team
- Family meeting to develop individualized attendance success plan
- Referral to district level Student Attendance Review Board
- Referral to Rice County

Academic Information

Course Structure

Falcons Online Academy contracts with Edgenuity, a provider that specializes in online curriculum. Courses through Edgenuity are typically designed to be one semester (0.5 credits) in length, although year-long courses are available based on student need and choice. Each semester course is designed to take 90 hours to complete, this means students are expected to

spend 45 minutes per day per course actively engaged to stay on pace. Once a student completes a course, the grade they have earned will be entered on the student's transcript and is used to determine cumulative grade point average and class rank.

Schedule Changes

Course changes are discouraged after the start of a course and are generally not made after two weeks of enrollment. Courses that are not completed will be documented on the student's transcript as a fail.

Minimum Course Load

The Falcons Online Academy course load is in alignment to the Faribault High School Schedule. In order to maintain full-time student enrollment status, a student will be scheduled a minimum of seven courses (grades 7-8), six courses (grades 9-11) and six courses (grade 12) per semester with the expectation to have them complete by the end of each semester.

Accessing Online Coursework

Students will receive login information for Edgenuity. Once logged into their account, students will have a dashboard that will allow them to access all of their courses. Edgenuity offers curriculum aligned to MN state standards. Teachers are able to monitor student progress, provide support when needed and connect with students and parents. Students will complete lessons, assessments and interactive activities as they learn coursework.

What do students need to know?

[Student Edgenuity Orientation Video](#) - view this video to understand the Edgenuity platform.

Edgenuity Login

Username: (Enter student's complete school email)

Password: (Enter student's school technology password)

Independent Work

Students are expected to work on a regular basis and remain on pace with their course work each week. Students will need to engage in each online course for 3-4 hours per week. Students are required to meet with their mentor teacher one time per week.

Learning Coach & Family Expectations

- Build a Schedule - Establish routines and expectations for your student to complete their school work.

- Model Hard Work and Persistence - Our students learn from example. Help your student take responsibility for their learning.
- Create a Space for your Student to do their Learning.
- Monitor student progress.
- Stay in Communication with your Student's Teacher(s) and encourage your student to reach out for help as needed.
- Get to Know the Falcons Online Academy systems
 - Edgenuity
 - Infinite Campus
 - Schoology (only used for some PE courses)
- Encourage Mental and Physical Health for your Student.

Progress Monitoring

Students are able to monitor their course progress from their dashboard within Edgenuity. Parents are able to monitor school progress in both Edgenuity and Infinite Campus (if dual enrolled) by creating a parent portal account for both Edgenuity and Infinite Campus. Questions regarding student progress should be directed to the teacher assigned to each specific course.

Parent-Teacher Conferences and Meetings

There will be an Open House for parents, students and families at the start of the school year to discuss expectations and provide training on learning platforms students and parents will be using. If students and parents are unable to attend, a 1:1 meeting may be scheduled to deliver expectations and necessary training.

Parent Conferences may be scheduled throughout the year. The purpose of these conferences is to inform parents/guardians of student progress with Falcons Online Academy. Parents/guardians are encouraged to access the Edgenuity parent portals for up-to-date progress on student performance.

Academic Help Center

Students have access to all academic supports embedded in the Edgenuity courseware, including guided notes, tutoring, calculator, and ability to use notes on assessments. In addition, students receiving Special Services (Special Education or Multilingual Learners) will have full access to in-person services and some virtual services for students with an IEP.

All students have academic support from their course teacher. Students should reach out to schedule a Google Meet or phone call with their teacher. In addition, some FOA teachers will staff the FOA Academic Center (room C106) at Faribault High School. All help in the FOA Academic Center needs to be scheduled ahead of time and students will only be admitted with an e-hallpass.

Students are expected to follow all Faribault High School rules while in the FOA Academic Center. Use of this space is a privilege and the HS Administration can ask FOA students to leave the building if they are causing a disruption.

Students on Campus

Part-time High School FOA students who wish to complete work in Faribault High School will be assigned a study hall in their HS schedule. Part-time FOA students may decline this option; **if students decline the study-hall, they are expected to leave campus for their online period(s).** FOA students will not be allowed to complete work in the Media Center without an e-hallpass from their study hall teacher or the FOA Coordinator.

All FOA students may access the FOA Academic Center during regular school days. Students must schedule an appointment with the teacher they wish to meet with at least 1 day in advance. This room will not be staffed all day or every day and will be locked when not in use. When students are finished with their appointment and work time they are expected to either return to class or leave the building.

Students are reminded to check in and out of the building using door 1. Students will be asked for appointment verification (e-hallpass) and to show their school-issued ID.

Students should park in the 2 hour parking and are subject to City of Faribault regulations in these spots, unless the student has a parking permit to park in the HS lot.

Any FOA student in a district building must follow the rules and guidelines as established by each building administration.

Grading

Edgenuity identifies three different types of grades while students are enrolled in courses: Actual, Relative, and Overall.

- Actual Grade: Grade on the work student has submitted, adjusted down if student is behind in progress. ****THIS IS THE GRADE REPORTED ON THE TRANSCRIPT**
- Relative Grade: Grade the student would get if all unfinished assignments are set to zero.
- Overall Grade: Grade on the work you have submitted. No penalty for any missing or overdue assignments.

Final Grade in a student's online course will be the student's Actual Grade.

Grading Scale

Grade	Scale (%)
A	100-93
A-	92-90
B+	89-87
B	86-83
B-	82-80
C+	79-77
C	76-73
C-	72-70
D+	69-67
D	66-63
D-	62-60
F	<59

Grade Values

Grade	Grade Value
A	4.000
A-	3.667
B+	3.333
B	3.000
B-	2.667
C+	2.333
C	2.000
C-	1.667
D+	1.333
D	1.000

D-	0.667
N	0.000

Pass/No Pass Option: Students may receive a P or NP as a final grade on a case by case basis. Students must schedule a meeting with their counselor and teacher at least three weeks prior to the end of the semester. Final decisions will be approved by the counselor and teacher. A “P” or “NP” has no GPA impact.

Repeated Course Option: Students who retake and pass a previously failed course will have the previous “N” earned removed.

- If the course is successfully completed, the “N” will be removed from course history and replaced with grade earned.
- The failed course must be retaken during the school day or through FOA.
- Students should work with their counselor to make sure all grade changes are accurate.

FOA Academic Honor Roll

“A” Honor Roll (Semester) - Need a GPA between 3.50 and 4.00

“B” Honor Roll (Semester) - Need a GPA between 3.00 and 3.499

****A student must have 5 6 gradable classes through FOA/FALC/FHS to be eligible for Honor Roll**

Graduation Requirements

Students enrolled in Falcons Online Academy will graduate with a Faribault High School Diploma and have the option to participate in the Faribault High School Graduation Ceremony. Therefore, students must meet the same graduation requirements as students attending Faribault High School and as outlined below.

For more specific information, please refer to the Faribault High School Handbook.

Required Course:

- 4.0 English Credits
- 3.5 Social Studies Credits
- 3.0 Math Credits
- 3.0 Science Credits
- 0.5 Health Credit
- 1.0 Physical Education Credit
- 8.0 Electives Credits

Total Required Course Credits: 15.0

Total Elective Course: 8.0

Total Credits Needed for Graduation: 23.0

FOA will work with students and families to ensure graduation with a Faribault Public Schools diploma. We know that online learning is not for all students; from time to time we may help a student discover the best learning environment for them. This could include hybrid online/in-person learning, continuation in FOA, return to building, or moving to the Area Learning Center (ALC). In addition, we work with students who fall behind in credits by referring the student to the ALC or the Faribault Education Center for credit recovery.

Technology

Students will be provided technology for use with Falcons Online Academy. The iPad Loan Agreement highlights key information about our 1:1 Technology and the responsibilities of students, families and Faribault Public Schools. Each student enrolled in Falcons Online Academy will be issued an iPad and Keyboard Case. Out of district FOA students who are full-time (6-7 courses) will be issued an iPad and Keyboard Case; supplemental (1-5 courses) out of district FOA students will not be provided FPS technology. Students needing assistance with reliable internet will also receive a hotspot with limited data intended for school use only. Families are strongly encouraged to enroll in the iPad Protection Plan upon receiving their devices.

Technology Support

If you are experiencing a technology issue, please contact the Falcons Online Academy Support Technician, Mr. Mustafe Abdulahi, at mabdulahi@faribault.k12.mn.us or (507)333-0000. Please send a message to Mr. Abdulahi and he will be sure to contact you as soon as he is available. Technology support is available Monday - Friday from 7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Academic Integrity

Falcons Online Academy expects all students to make a full commitment to academic integrity. Should your teacher suspect that cheating or plagiarism is taking place, you may be asked to verify your course work. This verification may include demonstration of mastery through additional course work, verbal demonstration of understanding, and proctored exams in school at Faribault Public Schools. Expectations of student work includes, but is not limited to:

- Work on each assignment, quiz, test, or exam is completely your own.
- Collaborating with other students on course work must be pre-approved by the course instructor.
- You will not cheat or plagiarize in any form.
- You will not allow others to copy your work.
- You will not misuse content from the internet.
- Only the student enrolled in the course may work on course content.

Honor Code

Falcons Online Academy believes academic and personal integrity are important aspects of our school culture. By following this academic honor code, we promote a culture of trust, responsibility, and excellence within our learning community of students and staff. As members of the Falcons Online Academy community, we ensure all work submitted is our own. We respect intellectual property by giving credit to any sources consulted in the completion of an assignment. We do not engage in dishonesty, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, or cheating. We understand our academic success depends on our personal effort and commitment to our learning.

Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism

Academic Dishonesty - includes but is not limited to copying someone else's work or allowing one's work to be copied; revealing test content, questions or answers; altering answers, scores or records.

Plagiarizing - act of using another person's ideas or expressions in writing or speaking without acknowledging the source; copying work from a book, computer source, or another individual.

Violations of this honor code will be taken seriously, and may result in disciplinary actions as deemed appropriate by FOA teachers and administration.

Workspace & Supplies

Students must have their iPads or personal devices charged and ready each day to complete their coursework. We strongly encourage students to have a designated space for work. High speed internet access is required - if this is not possible, please contact Kris Brazil at kbrazil@faribault.k12.mn.us or (507)333-6190 to assist with options.

Required course materials will be provided to students and can be picked up at the Faribault High School during Open House or a pre-arranged time with Kris Brazil at kbrazil@faribault.k12.mn.us or (507)333-6190.

While students are online, we encourage students to have access to notebooks, pencils, a calculator and other school supplies you would need in a traditional setting to promote academic success. We also recommend students have headsets/earbuds in order to participate in live instruction as needed. Students are encouraged to use the Edgenuity Online Tools embedded within the program to aid students in their learning.

Special Education/EL Services

Special Education and EL services are provided to qualified students enrolled in Falcons Online Academy. However, some of these services may be offered as in-person services. Services will be coordinated by the Online Learning Coordinator and the Assistant Special Education Director

or Student Success Coordinator upon enrollment.

Standardized Testing

Falcons Online Academy students are expected to participate in state and district assessments designed to measure student proficiency and progress within various subjects.

The Minnesota Comprehension Assessments are state assessments administered in grades 6-8, 10 and 11. Students are expected to attend in person testing sessions to complete the assessment. For more information on student participation, please see Appendix A.

Activities/Eligibility

Students attending Falcons Online Academy that live within the Faribault Public Schools boundary are able to participate in athletics and activities. Students will be expected to follow athletic guidelines outlined in the Faribault High School Handbook while participating in athletics and activities. Please contact Faribault High School Activities Office with questions or to register for specific athletics/activities at (507)333-6210.

ELIGIBILITY

Students are expected to maintain academic progress in all online courses to maintain eligibility for activities. FOA and the Activities Office will work together to determine eligibility and will follow the pacing guide each semester listed here.

EACH SEMESTER

<u>Mid-quarter:</u>	25% of course complete
<u>Quarter:</u>	50% of course complete
<u>Mid-Quarter:</u>	75% of course complete
<u>Quarter:</u>	100% of course complete

Activities Attendance Policy

STUDENTS: In order to maintain eligibility to practice, rehearse, compete or perform in any FHS co-curricular activity, the student must attend class all 7 periods. Pre-arranged absences with the approval of the Principal, Assistant Principal, or Activities Director will be considered an exception to the policy. All coaches/advisors are to explain this rule to the participants at the beginning of their season. Coaches/Advisors are expected to enforce this policy. If absences are not cleared by a parent/guardian, the absence will be considered unexcused and/or truant.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

The school reserves the right to require medical verification in cases where student absences are excessive. The amount of classroom instruction and work missed can be overwhelming and is

critical for future success.

Families are encouraged to notify the school in the event of a pending absence. It is the student's responsibility to inform their teachers of the absence and make arrangements to make up their work in a timely manner.

EXCUSED/UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Excused absences include - illness or medical appointment (that cannot be made outside of the school day), post-secondary school visits, family vacations/outings (with a parent/guardian), family emergencies verified by a parent/guardian (serious family illness, injury or death), absences caused by participation in school sponsored activities.

Unexcused absences include but are not limited to oversleeping, car trouble, non-medical or dental appointments. Unexcused tardiness for more than fifteen minutes is considered an unexcused absence.

If absences are Unexcused or Truant:

*Students that have an unexcused or truant absence will receive no credit from their teachers for the activities performed on the day of the absence.

*Students with unexcused absences or trancies will be given appropriate consequences by the Falcons Online Coordinator. Consequences will be progressive with succeeding unexcused absences and trancies.

Bullying Policy

[Faribault Public Schools Bullying Policy](#)

Links to School District Policies

[102 - Equal Educational Opportunity](#)

[413 - Harassment & Violence](#)

[501 - School Weapons](#)

[503 - School Attendance](#)

[504 - Student Dress & Appearance](#)

[506 - Student Discipline](#)

[509 - Enrollment of Nonresident Students](#)

[513 - Student Promotion, Retention & Program Design](#)

[515 - Protection & Privacy of Pupil Records](#)

[524 - Internet Acceptable Use & Safety](#)

[526 - Hazing Prohibition](#)

[529 - Staff Notification of Violent Behavior by Student](#)

Appendix A



Statewide Assessments: Parent/Guardian Participation Guide and Refusal Information

Your student's participation in statewide assessments is important as it allows your school and district to ensure all students have access to a high-quality education. In the past, students with disabilities and English learners were often excluded from statewide assessments. By requiring that all students take statewide assessments, schools and teachers have more information to see how all students are doing. This helps schools to continuously improve the education they provide and to identify groups, grades, or subjects that may need additional support.

Assessments Connect to Standards

Statewide assessments are based on the [Minnesota Academic Standards](#) or the [WIDA English Language Development Standards](#). These standards define the knowledge and skills students should be learning in K–12 public and charter schools. Minnesota prioritizes high-quality education, and statewide assessments gives educators and leaders an opportunity to evaluate student and school success.

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

MCA and MTAS are the annual assessments in reading, mathematics and science that measure a snapshot of student learning of the Minnesota K–12 Academic Standards.

ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for English Learners

The ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS are the annual assessments for English learners that provide information about their progress in learning academic English based on the WIDA English Language Development Standards.

Statewide Assessments Help Families and Students

Participating in statewide assessments helps families see a snapshot of their student's learning so they can advocate for their success in school. High school students can use MCA results:

- For course placement at a Minnesota State college or university. If students receive a college-ready score, they may not need to take a remedial, noncredit course for that subject.
- For Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) and College in the Schools programs.

English learners who take the ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS and meet certain requirements have the opportunity to exit from English learner programs.

Taking Statewide Assessments Helps Your Student's School

Statewide assessments provide information to your school and district about how all students are engaging with the content they learn in school. This information helps:

- Educators evaluate their instructional materials.
- Schools and districts identify inequities between groups, explore root causes and implement supports.
- School and district leaders make decisions about how to use money and resources to support all students.

Student Participation in Statewide Assessments

Student participation in state and locally required assessments is a parent/guardian choice. If you choose to have your student not participate in a statewide assessment, please provide a reason for your decision on the form. Contact your student's school to learn more about locally required assessments.

Consequences of Not Participating in Statewide Assessments

- The student will not receive an individual score. For ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, the student would not have the opportunity to exit their English learner program.
- School and district assessment results will be incomplete, making it more difficult to have an accurate picture of student learning.
- Since all eligible students are included in some calculations even when they do not participate, school and district accountability results are impacted. This may affect the school's ability to be identified for support or recognized for success.

Check with your local school or district to see if there are any other consequences for not participating.

Explore
the Statewide
Testing page
for more
information

(education.mn.gov >
Students and Families >
Programs and Initiatives >
Statewide Testing)

Additional Information

- On average, students spend less than 1 percent of instructional time taking statewide assessments each year.
- Minnesota statutes limit the total amount of time students can spend taking other district- or school-wide assessments to 11 hours or less each school year, depending on the grade.
- School districts and charter schools are required to publish an assessment calendar on their website by the beginning of each school year. Refer to your district or charter school's website for more information on assessments.

(Note: This form is only applicable for the 20__ to 20__ school year.)



Statewide Assessment: Parent/Guardian Decision Not to Participate

By completing this form, you are acknowledging that your student will not participate in statewide assessments and will not receive individual assessment results. This form must be returned to your student's school before the applicable test administration.

Student Information

First Name: _____ Middle Initial: _____ Last Name: _____

Date of Birth: ____/____/____ Current Grade in School: _____

School: _____ District: _____

Parent/Guardian Name (print): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

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/Alternate ACCESS

Contact your school or district for more information on how to opt out of local assessments.