

Appropriate and Inappropriate Uses of Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) Results

Appropriate Uses of Results



Looking at overall proficiency for a grade, school and/or district

Looking at overall proficiency can be used to evaluate equitable opportunities for all students in learning the Minnesota Academic Standards.



Comparing results across student groups

Comparing results across student groups can help determine where there may be underlying inequities and highlight promising instructional practices.



Looking at changes in achievement/performance levels over time

Looking at achievement/performance levels within the same test series over time can help support the evaluation of curriculum and district/classroom assessments that reflect the rigor of the standards.



Using as one of multiple data points for school and district decision-making

Using multiple data points can strengthen the connection between the district's comprehensive assessment system and support evidence-based decision making.

Inappropriate Uses of Results



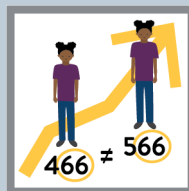
Using results as a mandatory indicator for program placement and/or to determine instructional support or interventions

Test scores should not be used as the only indicator to determine program placement and/or intervention programming, but could be used with additional evidence or data.



Focusing only on individual student scores for planning and instruction

Instructional decisions should be based on student group results, rather than individual results.



Using scale scores to calculate individual student growth

Subtraction of scale scores does not determine student growth. Instead, the achievement levels can provide a general sense of progress in a subject over time for individual students.



Using results in isolation to evaluate teacher effectiveness

Teacher effectiveness should be evaluated using multiple data points.



Comparing MCA-III results to MCA-IV results

The new MCA-IV series aligns with revised Minnesota Academic Standards. Because they assess different standards, results are not comparable to previous assessments.

Questions?

Contact Academic Standards, Instruction and Assessment at mde.testing@state.mn.us.