

Alt MCA Individual Student Report (ISR) Quick Guide for Science

Individual Student Reports (or ISRs) are generated for every student who is expected to take a statewide assessment. The ISR provides information about your student's performance and learning of the Minnesota Academic Standards.

The Science Alternate MCA (Alt MCA) may be taken in place of the MCA for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. The Alt MCA is administered in grades 5 and 8 and in the year of high school life science coursework completion.

Beginning in 2024–25, each subject and test appears on a separate ISR.

If your student did not participate, the ISR shows why results are not included (for example, absent or not completed).

Alt MCA Sci Gr 8

m1 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Sample A. Student
School One
District Eight

1 Spring 2025
Grade 8

These are Carina's results from the Science Alternate Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (Alt MCA) taken in the spring of 2025.

2 Sample took the majority of the Science Alternate MCA using online test materials independently with Test Administrator supervision.

Sample engaged in some or all of the questions using educational objects or manipulatives as part of their test materials (for example: using math counters or models to show food webs, life cycles of other science topics).

3

4

Science: Carina's Overall Alt MCA Results

Sample's score of 216 shows evidence of learning at the **Meets** level for grade-level expectations in science. The Science Alternate MCA measures learning of the extended benchmarks based upon the Minnesota Academic Standards in Science.

A grade 8 student with a score at the Meets level needs minimal levels of support and scaffolding of skills when completing academic tasks and shows evidence of being able to:

- Identify patterns that cause changes in weather conditions, use data or a model to assess how a solution reduces human impact on the environment, and interpret data or a model to find variables within human activity and natural processes that cause temperature changes over time.
- Use evidence to distinguish between plant and animal cells, use a model or data to identify the cycle of matter or flow of energy among parts of an ecosystem, and use data or a model to describe the effects of the availability of food, shelter, and water on populations within an ecosystem.
- Interpret data to determine if a chemical change has occurred and describe the risks and benefits of using natural resources to make synthetic materials.

5

Scores in the **Meets** and **Advanced** performance levels demonstrate proficiency in grade level standards.

6

In spring 2025, 45% of the grade 8 students in Minnesota who took the Science Alt MCA performed at the meets and advanced levels. Performing at these levels demonstrates proficiency in the knowledge and skills described in the extended benchmarks of the academic standards.

education.mn.gov MARSS/SSID:0001000070909 Local Use#:963 Page 1 of 2
06132025-20000001-4183-07-10-0000001

1. Student Information—Student Name, Grade, School, District, Date, and Assessment.
2. Administration Mode—The Alt MCA can be administered online, on paper, or a hybrid of both. The mode used by your student is indicated. If your student's test was ended early, that is also indicated here.
3. Object Use—Description included if objects or manipulatives were used during administration.
4. Overall Results—A description of your student's performance and learning of the extended benchmarks of the Minnesota Academic Standards.
5. Performance Level—The bar graph shows your student's overall score in the range of performance levels. There are four performance levels: Beginning, Intermediate, Meets, and Advanced.
6. State Proficiency—Percentage of students showing proficiency in grade-level standards on that year's MCA-IV at the state level.



Information for students and families is available on the [MDE Statewide Testing Students and Families Assessment Results](https://education.mn.gov) website (education.mn.gov > Students and Families > Programs and Initiatives > Statewide Testing > Assessment Results).

7 Performance Related to Cognitive Complexity

On the Science Alt MCA, each task has three questions that have an increasing level of cognitive complexity. Question complexity can depend on many variables, including how many answer options there are and how much support the question provides with pictures or graphs. This section shows how your student is doing on questions with increasing levels of complexity. Complexity levels are reported as points earned out of points possible.

Complexity Level	Content Description	Points Earned/ Points Possible
Low	Questions at this level generally require students to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify weather conditions. Identify producers, consumers, and decomposers within an ecosystem. Identify that synthetic materials are made from natural resources. Identify what indicates a chemical change. Identify human activities that affect temperature over time. Identify human impact on the environment. Identify that plants and animals are made of cells and are different. Identify the predator of a given animal. Identify that living things need food, water, and shelter to survive. 	7 / 9
Medium	Questions at this level generally require students to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify patterns resulting in weather changes. Identify a solution that minimizes human impact on the environment. Identify the effects of the availability of food, water and shelter on a living thing. Identify the movement of energy among living things within a food chain or web. Compare plant and animal cells. Determine if chemical reactions have occurred. Use a data set or food web to predict competition between plants and/or animals. Determine how variables within human activities and natural processes affect changes in temperature over time. Describe the risks and benefits of using natural resources to make synthetic materials. 	6 / 9
High	Questions at this level generally require students to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use data to identify atmospheric patterns that result in changes in weather conditions. Assess solutions that minimize human impact on the environment. Describe the cycling of matter and/or movement of energy among parts of an ecosystem. Use information from various cultural communities to interpret patterns of interactions within an ecosystem, including invasive species impacts and/or mutualism. Compare questions about changes in temperature over time. Describe the steps of an investigation that demonstrates that plants and animals are made of different types of cells and/or either one cell or many cells. 	8 / 9

8

9



Scan the QR code to access a video about the new science assessments. For more information, go to the [MDE Students and Families Statewide Testing Assessment Results](https://education.mn.gov/Students-and-Families/Programs-and-Initiatives/Statewide-Testing/Assessment-Results) website (education.mn.gov > Students and Families > Programs and Initiatives > Statewide Testing > Assessment Results).



How to request this report in a translated language or an alternative format:

If your home language has been reported to your student's school, a QR code may be included on page 1 to a video with translated audio and/or captions. This ISR report format may also be made available in another translated language or an alternative format, such as large print, braille, or as an audio file. Contact MDE by email at mde.test@state.mn.us, by phone 651-582-8674 or by fax 651-582-8874. TTY users may call the Minnesota Relay Service at 711.

10

- Performance Related to Cognitive Complexity—The questions require students to use varying levels of cognitive complexity. This section describes how your student is doing on questions with increasing levels of complexity.
- Points Earned/Points Possible—For each complexity level, the number of points earned out of points possible for the questions is reported.
- Overview of the New Science Assessments—An overview video can be accessed by scanning the QR code printed on the report or contacting your student's school for a link. The video may also be available in a home language based on student enrollment data, if specified.
- Contact Information—To request the report in an alternative format or translated language, please contact the Minnesota Department of Education.