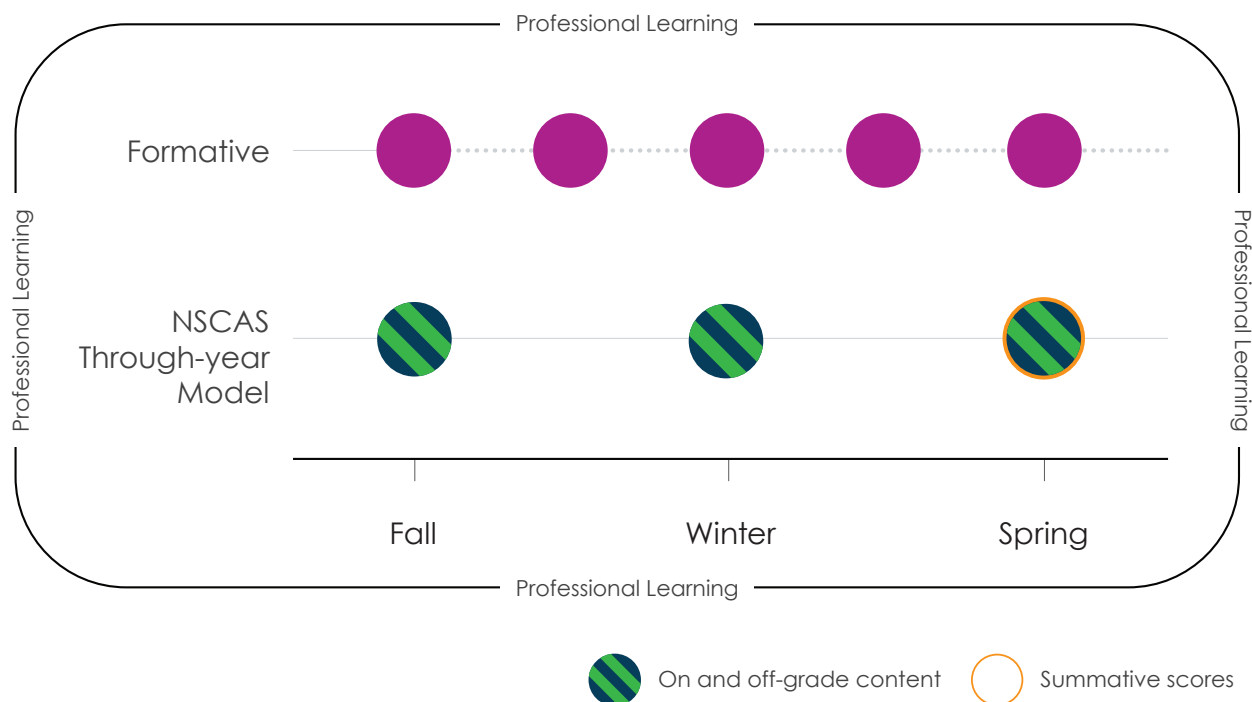


# The Evolution of NSCAS: Unifying Growth and Summative Measures to Support Learning

The Nebraska Student-Centered Assessment System (NSCAS) was developed to support the connection between curriculum, instruction, and assessment. It includes formative, interim, and summative (proficiency) measures, with the recognition that educators need different types of data to inform teaching and learning.

The goal from day one has been to make assessment more useful in the classroom, so the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) has been working with Nebraska districts to increase the instructional relevance of summative data and reduce the challenges teachers and students face in managing both interim and summative tests.

As part of this effort, in 2021-22, Nebraska districts will transition to an adaptive, through-year assessment model for grades 3–8 in English language arts and mathematics. NSCAS through-year assessment combines the best of MAP® Growth™ and the NSCAS General Summative test to reduce overall testing and provide better data during the year to support learning.



## The NSCAS adaptive through-year model produces growth and summative scores

The NSCAS adaptive through-year model is like a hybrid of the current NSCAS General Summative and NSCAS Interim (MAP Growth). Fall, winter, and spring tests will adapt outside of grade level to reflect student learning level and growth. The assessments will also measure student performance relative to the NSCAS General Summative, providing grade-level performance information throughout the school year for instructional purposes. Information from the fall, winter, and spring assessments will culminate in summative proficiency scores at year's end. This unified approach will increase testing efficiency while providing access to normative and criterion-based information throughout the year to support teaching and learning.

## Formative practice and professional learning support informed action

NDE will continue to support formative instructional practice with professional learning and access to tools for building classroom-based assessments. Online learning content and onsite workshops led by Nebraska-certified facilitators will also challenge traditional notions about the purpose and timing of assessments and support Nebraska educators in learning about the multiple data types produced by the adaptive through-year model. Sessions will equip educators to use growth and grade-level performance information, alongside other sources of knowledge and professional judgment, to inform instruction and improve student learning.

# NSCAS Adaptive Through-Year Model: Best of Both Worlds

## Retaining the best of MAP Growth

NSCAS adaptive through-year assessment will:

- Take about the same time as MAP Growth to complete for each content area
- Measure student performance and growth irrespective of grade level, within and across years
- Produce RIT information in fall, winter, and spring
- Provide access to NWEA's norms so growth can be considered in context of similar students nationwide
- Be adaptive, accounting for differences in scope and sequence (retain local control)
- Include access to a tool similar to the Learning Continuum that is rooted in Nebraska's Achievement Level Descriptors (ALDs)
- Support student mobility (scores and longitudinal history will follow students when they transfer schools and/or districts)

## Retaining and improving the best of NSCAS General Summative

NSCAS adaptive through-year assessment will:

- Measure student performance relative to grade-level expectations, adding criterion-referenced information to reports in fall, winter, and spring
- Produce information based on Nebraska's ALDs to better support teachers in helping students reach and exceed standards-based learning targets
- Transform the Learning Continuum into a new tool rooted in Nebraska's ALDs
- Provide multiple chances for students to demonstrate proficiency (and beyond) while also eliminating the retesting of students on concepts they have already mastered
- Reflect the voice of Nebraska educators in the assessment system

## Information produced by NSCAS adaptive through-year assessments

What	When
RIT information, including access to norms	Fall, winter, spring
Grade-level data based on indicators used to determine summative proficiency	Fall, winter
Projected summative proficiency scores	Fall, winter
Official summative proficiency scores and classification	Spring

## Important dates

**2019-2020:** Nebraska districts administer MAP Growth and the NSCAS General Summative.

**2020-2021:** Nebraska districts administer modified versions of MAP Growth and the NSCAS General Summative to support initial research studies required to move toward the NSCAS adaptive through-year model.

**2021-2022:** Nebraska districts will transition to the NSCAS adaptive through-year model, administering through-year assessments in the fall, winter, and spring. Districts may choose not to administer the fall and winter assessments but will have limited information to inform instruction and monitor growth and will have a spring experience that is augmented to ensure blueprint coverage is met.

