

NSCAS General Summative Assessment for Grades 3–8

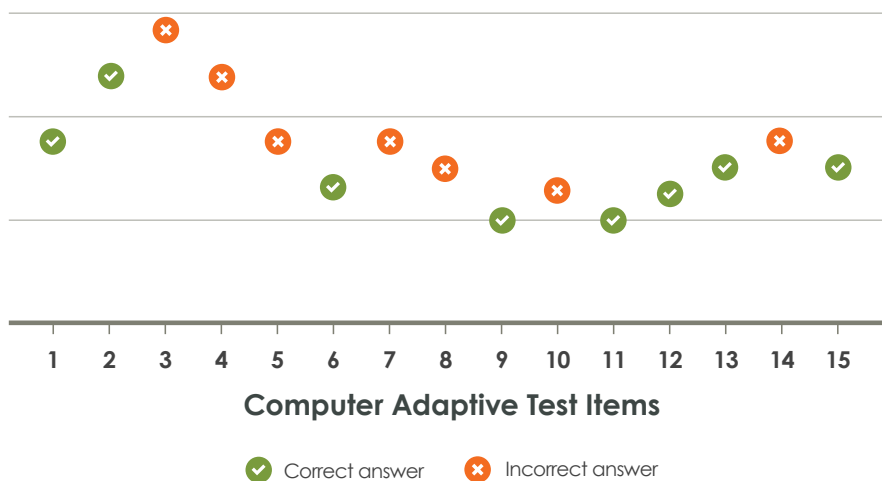
Nebraska's Student-Centered Assessment System (NSCAS), pronounced "en-skass," is a statewide assessment system that supports Nebraska's holistic view of students. It includes formative, interim, and summative measures that together provide valuable information to educators and parents as they prepare students for success in postsecondary education, career, and civic life.

The NSCAS General Summative, administered annually in the spring, is the component of NSCAS that assesses whether students have learned what they are expected to learn at their grade level. It measures student performance against Nebraska's content area standards for English language arts (ELA) and mathematics (grades 3–8) and for science (grades 5 and 8).

Computer Adaptive Test

The NSCAS General Summative is a Computer Adaptive Test (CAT). It is taken on a computer or tablet, such as a Chromebook® or iPad®. This allows for more interactive questions and enables the test to adapt in response to each student's performance.

If a student answers a question correctly, the next question will be more difficult. If a student answers a question incorrectly, the next question will be easier. This creates an efficient, personalized experience and provides students the best opportunity to show what they know. Because the next question is based on how the student answered previously, the student cannot go back to an already-answered question. In addition, a student cannot proceed to the next question until the current question is answered. While the test adapts to each student's performance, the questions it presents are aligned to the student's grade level.



Spring 2021

The spring 2021 NSCAS tests administered for ELA and mathematics will be transitional and are designed to help Nebraska prepare to implement an improved approach to assessing student grade-level performance in the 2021-22 school year. Students may notice that the tests are also shorter, reflecting the state's effort to preserve instructional time in spring 2021 in recognition of the unique circumstances created by the pandemic this year.

Spring 2021 also marks a transition for the science assessment, as students in grades 5 and 8 will take a field test for Nebraska's College and Career Ready Standards for Science (NCCRS-S). The field test will inform Nebraska's transition to the operational test that will be administered for science in 2022.

An alternate assessment—the NSCAS Alternate—will also be available in spring 2021 for ELA, math, and science for students with significant cognitive disabilities.

Scores and Achievement Levels

Students' performance on the NSCAS General Summative is reported as a scale score and achievement level. The scale score is a representation of the total number of questions answered correctly and has been converted into a standard scale. Each content area is scaled separately, so the scale scores for one content area cannot be compared to another content area. The achievement level is a description of the student's overall performance and is used to help make the scale scores meaningful. Scale score ranges, or cut scores, define different achievement levels for each grade and content area.

Results

The tests administered for ELA, mathematics, and science in spring 2021 are transitional. They are helping the state move toward new and improved assessments for the 2021–22 school year. For this reason, in spring 2021, ISRs will be providing a measure of performance, and results will not be used to classify schools or districts.

Given that science is a field test, no science results will be reported to districts or the public. To understand student performance and help students continue their learning through the summer and fall of 2021, families should talk with their children's teachers about their engagement in learning and their performance on assignments and assessments such as MAP® Growth™.

2021 NSCAS General Summative Dates

March 22–April 30, 2021
May 3–May 7, 2021: Make-up week

