Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA)

MCA scores help districts measure student progress towards Minnesota’s academic standards and meet the requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Students take tests in Science, Mathematics, and Reading.

Data available from academic years 2000-2001 through 2015-2016 (Math & Reading); 2008-2009 through 2015-2016 (Science)

MCA data comes to Minn-Link in text files from the Department of Education. Data are organized at child level by MARSS ID. The MARSS ID is a unique identification number given to a child when they first enter the public school system and the same ID follows them throughout their public school education.

Commonly used variables in MCA:

- Indicator of Math, Science, or Reading Assessment
- Test Date
- Test Type (MCA I, II, or III)
- Scale Score
  - Listed as a number such as 35900 (first number [either ‘3’ or ‘03’] indicates grade of the student, second 2 numbers indicate the test score [‘59’], and all scores end with ‘00’)
- Proficiency Label (D – does not meet standards, P – partially meets standards, M – meets standards, E – exceeds standards)
  - ‘D’ and ‘P’ indicate a lack of proficiency; ‘M’ and ‘E’ indicate proficiency