



NEWS RELEASE

For additional information, please contact David Jespersen by phone (402-471-4537) or email (david.jespersen@nebraska.gov)

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FIRST YEAR OF NSCAS SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT SUCCESSFULLY CONCLUDES

The Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) announces that the first year of the NSCAS Summative assessment, part of the Nebraska Student-Centered Assessment System (NSCAS), has concluded successfully.

The NSCAS is a systemic approach that puts students at the center of teaching and learning with formative assessments that help educators monitor student understanding, interim assessments that track academic growth and reveal student learning needs, and summative assessments that measure student achievement.

More than 300,000 Nebraska students completed the NSCAS Summative between March 19 and May 4, 2018. The new computer-adaptive assessment was custom built by NDE and Nebraska teachers with the not-for-profit assessment provider NWEA. The NSCAS Summative measures student achievement relative to Nebraska's content area standards in grades three through eight for English language arts (ELA) and mathematics and grades five and eight for science.

"Overall, we received positive feedback from educators and administrators about the NSCAS Summative experience and are pleased that it was implemented well across the state," said Matthew Blomstedt, Nebraska Commissioner of Education. "NDE looks forward to providing educators with rich, individualized achievement data that will support them in providing equitable educational experiences that attend to each student's unique needs."

The 2018 NSCAS Summative results will be available to parents and school districts this fall, after the completion of a standard-setting process this summer to define achievement levels and corresponding minimum scores for each grade. Starting in the 2018-2019 school year, results will be available shortly after the close of the testing window, when all students have been assessed. The timely release of results will enable educators and parents to address roadblocks to student progress ahead of the next school year.

Effectively using different types of assessment data to meet individual student learning needs is critical to improving student outcomes, so NDE offers onsite and online professional learning opportunities at no cost to districts as part of NSCAS.

This school year approximately 3,000 Nebraska educators participated in over 200 NSCAS onsite workshops run by Nebraska Certified Facilitators. Sessions focused on helping educators understand the purpose of different types of assessment, build formative assessment practice, and gain expertise in interpreting and applying assessment reports to instruction.

Similar professional learning opportunities will be offered in the 2018-2019 school year, with a focus on increasing impact on student learning with data-informed differentiated instruction, protocols for assessing students' written analyses of text, and in-depth formative practices in the classroom. These workshops will enable Nebraska Certified Facilitators to adjust depth and focus of content based on the needs of the districts they support.

More information on the new NSCAS assessment system can be found at <https://www.education.ne.gov/assessment/nscas-system/>.

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David Jespersen
Public Information Officer, Nebraska Department of Education
402-471-4537
david.jespersen@nebraska.gov
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