



Nebraska Student-Centered Assessment System (NSCAS)

GUIDANCE FOR ASSESSMENT PERFORMANCE AND PARTICIPATION CALCULATIONS

2024-2025 V 1.0

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1 GENERAL INFORMATION AND SCOPE

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance on how the student assessment data collected through the Nebraska Student-Centered Assessment System (NSCAS) are compiled for calculation of performance and participation. This data is then published on the Nebraska Education Profile. The profile displays English language arts, math, and science performance and participation for students in grades 3-8 and students who are in the 3rd-Year High School Cohort. The following pages explain how the data are collected from vendors and how the data are used in calculations. If you have any questions, please contact the Statewide Assessment Office at 402-314-3013.

1.1 Subjects Assessed

Students are assessed in the following subjects

1. English Language Arts
2. Mathematics
3. Science (Grades 5, 8, and 3rd-Year High School Cohort only)

1.2 Assessments Administered

Assessments were administered utilizing the following Assessment vendors

1. Grades 3-8, except Alternate Assessment – Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA)
2. 3rd-Year High School Cohort, except Alternate Assessment – ACT
3. Alternate Assessment, grades 3-8 and 3rd-Year High School Cohort – Data Recognition Corporation (DRC)

2 PROFICIENCY

This section describes both how a student’s proficiency level is determined and how the percentage proficient is calculated at all levels (state, district, school) and for all groupings (all students and subgroups).

2.1 Proficiency Levels

For all NSCAS assessments, there are three proficiency levels. The description of the proficiency levels varies based on the assessment, but for consistency sake, the same coding is used in the data to denote these levels. Students with a proficiency level of “3” are at the lowest level of proficiency for the assessment, students with a proficiency level of “2” are in the middle level, and students with a proficiency level of “1” are at the highest level. Students with a proficiency level of “2” or “1” are considered Proficient for all assessments.

Code	Rank	Proficient?
3	Lowest	Not Proficient
2	Middle	Proficient
1	Highest	Proficient

2.2 Scale Score

Each student will receive a scale score in each subject level completed. The scale score will be reported to NDE by the appropriate assessment vendor.

2.3 Students Not Tested

Due to various circumstances, some students will not be tested in one or more subjects. Assignment of a Scale Score for these students varies based on the reason no assessment was administered. See *Section 7 - Reason Not Tested Codes* later in this document for more information.

2.3.1 Without Valid Reason

Students who are not tested and are without a valid reason are assigned a Scale Score. The Scale Score assigned is dependent on the assessment, generally reflecting the lowest score possible on the assessment.

2.3.2 With Valid Reason

Students who are not tested and have a valid reason are not assigned a Scale Score.

2.4 Student Proficiency

To determine a student’s proficiency level, the Scale Score for the student is compared against the scale-score ranges for appropriate assessment, subject level, and grade level to determine the appropriate proficiency level. Each student will receive a separate proficiency level for each subject where a scale score is assigned. Students assigned a scale score per 2.3.1 are assigned to the lowest proficiency level (3).

2.5 Students Tested but Excluded from Proficiency Calculations

2.5.1 Recently Arrived English Learners

Recently Arrived English Learners (RAELs) are students who have been enrolled in a school in one of the 50 states in the United States or the District of Columbia for less than 12 months. The state must assess and report the performance of a recently arrived English learner on the English language arts and mathematics assessments in each year of the student’s enrollment. And for the purpose of state accountability:

- In Year 1: students are included in participation calculations, but results are excluded on the English language arts and math assessments in the state accountability system.
- In Year 2: students are included in participation calculations and results are used in growth measures but not achievement indicators in the state accountability system.
- In Year 3: students are included in all accountability calculations.

2.6 Performance Level Percentage

To determine the performance level percentage for any subject, subgroup, and grade and at any level (state, district, school), the calculation is the same (see previous section for excluded students). The formula is as follows:

Students at a proficiency level / Students assigned any proficiency level

2.6.1 Groups Calculated

Proficiency calculations are made at the following combinations

SUBJECT	AGENCY	SUBGROUP*	GRADE
English Language Arts	State	All Students	All Grades
Math	District	Gender (M, F)	Grade 3
Science	School	Race (AM, AS, BL, HI, PI, WH, MU)	Grade 4
		Special Education	Grade 5
		Free & Reduced Lunch	Grade 6
		English Learners	Grade 7
		Migrant	Grade 8
		Homeless	3 rd -Year HS Cohort
		Unaccompanied Youth	
		Highly Mobile	
		Military Parent	

		Foster	
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*Other subgroups calculated are Not Receiving Free & Reduced Lunch, Not in Special Education, and Special Education Students – Alternate Assessment.

At School level, only Grades that are offered in the school are calculated.

At School and District level, only Subgroups that exist in the school/district in assessed grades are calculated.

2.6.2 Students at a proficiency level (Numerator)

For each proficiency level, count the number of students who achieved the proficiency level and who belong to the subject, agency, subgroup, and grade being calculated.

2.6.3 Students assigned any proficiency level (Denominator)

Count the total number of students who were assigned any proficiency level at the subject, agency, subgroup, and grade being calculated.

2.6.4 Data Check

The sum of the percent proficient at each proficiency level and for each group (subject/agency/subgroup/grade) should equal 100%. This is because the number of students at proficiency level 1 plus the number of students at proficiency level 2 plus the number of students at proficiency level 3 should equal the total number of students assigned any proficiency level.

2.7 Percent Proficient

Percent Proficient can be determined by summing the Performance Level 2 Percentage and Performance Level 1 Percentage.

2.8 Average Scale Score

Was updated to: All students with matching NSCAS assessment formats whose scale score is included in the Performance Level Percentage calculations will be included when calculating the Average Scale Score for that assessment format. Average Scale Score is determined for the same groups as Performance Level Percentage and includes all students of the same assessment format whose Performance Levels were used in the Performance Level Percentage calculations. It is calculated by adding all scale scores and dividing by the total number of students with a scale score.

3 PARTICIPATION

This section describes how to determine if a student is considered a participant for NSCAS, how to calculate participation rates, and for which groups such a rate is calculated.

3.1 Student Participation

Students are included in the calculation for participation where any of the following apply

1. The student took the test, received a scale score, and was assigned a proficiency level.
2. The student did not take the test and did not have a valid reason for not testing (see Section 7 Reason Not Tested Codes).

3.2 Participation Calculation

3.2.1 Participants (Numerator)

Students who took the test, received a scale score, and were assigned a proficiency level are included in the numerator. These students are considered Participants.

3.2.2 Potential Participants (Denominator)

Students who took the test, received a scale score, and were assigned a proficiency level are included along with students who did not take the test and did not have a valid reason for not testing.

3.2.3 Percent Participation

$\text{Participants} / \text{Potential Participants} = \text{Percent Participation}$

3.3 Percent Participation Groups

All groups included in 2.6.1 will have a Percent Participation calculated.

4 GRADES 3-8, EXCEPT ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT

Students in grades 3-8, except those that take the alternate assessment, are given the NWEA assessment.

4.1 Scale Score / Performance Level Conversion

English Language Arts

Grade Level	Performance Level	Code	Scale Score Conversion
3	Level 3	3	2220-2449
	Level 2	2	2450-2535
	Level 1	1	2536-2840
4	Level 3	3	2250-2477
	Level 2	2	2478-2566
	Level 1	1	2567-2850
5	Level 3	3	2280-2498
	Level 2	2	2499-2585
	Level 1	1	2586-2860
6	Level 3	3	2290-2508
	Level 2	2	2509-2593
	Level 1	1	2594-2870
7	Level 3	3	2300-2517
	Level 2	2	2518-2600
	Level 1	1	2601-2880
8	Level 3	3	2310-2523
	Level 2	2	2524-2623
	Level 1	1	2624-2890

Mathematics

Grade Level	Performance Level	Code	Scale Score Conversion
3	Level 3	3	1000-1165
	Level 2	2	1166-1263
	Level 1	1	1264-1470
4	Level 3	3	1010-1194
	Level 2	2	1195-1300
	Level 1	1	1301-1500
5	Level 3	3	1020-1215
	Level 2	2	1216-1318
	Level 1	1	1319-1510
6	Level 3	3	1030-1225
	Level 2	2	1226-1333
	Level 1	1	1334-1530
7	Level 3	3	1040-1227
	Level 2	2	1228-1336
	Level 1	1	1337-1540
			1337-1540
8	Level 3	3	1050-1236
	Level 2	2	1237-1346
	Level 1	1	1347-1550

Science

Performance Level	Code	Scale Score Conversion
Developing	3	3000-3099
On Track	2	3100-3149
Advanced	1	3150-3250

5 3rd-Year High School Cohort

Students in the 3rd-year High School Cohort, except those that take the alternate assessment, are given the ACT assessment.

5.1 Scale Score / Performance Level Conversion

Scale Score Conversion				
Performance Level	Code	English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science
Developing	3	1-17	1-17	1-18
On Track	2	18-19	18-21	19-22
ACT Benchmark	1	20-36	22-36	23-36

6 ALTERNATE ASSESSMENTS, GRADES 3-8 and 3rd-Year HS Cohort

Students reported in the ADVISER Special Education Snapshot, who meet the guidelines for inclusion in the Special Education subgroup (see rules in Subgroup Determinations portion of this document), and who have the Alternate Assessment flag marked as “Yes” are assessed separately from other students, using an assessment from Data Recognition Corporation.

6.1 Scale Score / Performance Level Conversion

English Language Arts

Grade Level	Performance Level	Code	Scale Score Conversion
3	Level 3	3	Below 200
	Level 2	2	200-249
	Level 1	1	250-300
4	Level 3	3	Below 200
	Level 2	2	200-249
	Level 1	1	250-300
5	Level 3	3	Below 200
	Level 2	2	200-249
	Level 1	1	250-300
6	Level 3	3	Below 200
	Level 2	2	200-249
	Level 1	1	250-300
7	Level 3	3	Below 200
	Level 2	2	200-249
	Level 1	1	250-300
8	Level 3	3	Below 200
	Level 2	2	200-249
	Level 1	1	250-300

Mathematics

Grade Level	Performance Level	Code	Scale Score Conversion
3	Level 3	3	Below 200
	Level 2	2	200-249
	Level 1	1	250-300
4	Level 3	3	Below 200
	Level 2	2	200-249
	Level 1	1	250-300
5	Level 3	3	Below 200
	Level 2	2	200-249
	Level 1	1	250-300
6	Level 3	3	Below 200
	Level 2	2	200-249
	Level 1	1	250-300
7	Level 3	3	Below 200
	Level 2	2	200-249
	Level 1	1	250-300
8	Level 3	3	Below 200
	Level 2	2	200-249
	Level 1	1	250-300

Science

Performance Level	Code	Scale Score Conversion
Developing	3	Below 200
On Track	2	200-249
Advanced	1	250-300

7 REASON NOT TESTED CODES

Various codes are used in the Assessment test results to indicate the reason a student was not tested. Student inclusion in reporting varies based on the code.

CODE	DESCRIPTION	EXPLANATION	TESTS	REPORTING
ALT	Alternate Assessment	Student took the alternate assessment and is not included in results from this testing vendor	ACT NWEA	Not included in reporting
EMW	Emergency Medical Waiver	Student was not tested because of an Emergency Medical Waiver	ALL	Not included in reporting
EXP	Exempt	Student exempt from testing due to certain circumstances, such as a student requiring an unprovided accommodation; student attending an out-of-state facility.	ALL	Not included in reporting
FTE	Full-Time Equivalency	Full-Time Equivalency is less than 51% so the student is excluded from testing.	ALL	Not included in reporting
GEN	General Assessment	Student's Alternate Assessment status changed and was administered the General or ACT Assessment	DRC	
INV	Invalid	Student's assessment was invalidated.	ALL	Participant Scale Score = lowest score Performance Level = 3
LBW	Left Before Window	Student withdrew from district before the test window(s) began.	ALL	Not included in reporting
NCE	Not Currently Enrolled	Student started/withdrew enrollment in the district/school during the testing window(s).	ALL	Not included in reporting
NEI	Not enough Information	Student did not complete enough operational items on the test to calculate a score.	NWEA	Participant Scale Score = lowest score Performance Level = 3
NOR	NonResponsive	Student is unable to interact & respond to any item on the test	DRC	Participant Scale Score = lowest score Performance Level = 3

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OTH	Other	Student was not tested for reasons not covered by other descriptions.	ALL	Not included in reporting
PAR	Parent Refusal	Student was not tested because of a formal request from the parent or guardian.	ALL	Non-Participant Scale Score = lowest score Performance Level = 3
RMV	Removed	Student was removed from the assessment file for reasons not otherwise covered.	ALL	Not included in reporting
STR	Student Refusal	Student was not tested due to student refusal to start or participate in testing.	ALL	Non-Participant Scale Score = lowest score Performance Level = 3
UTT	Unable to Test	District was unable to test the student during the testing window(s) due to excessive absences or suspension/expulsion.	ALL	Non-Participant Scale Score = lowest score Performance Level = 3

8 SUBGROUP DETERMINATIONS

Calculations are made for the following subgroups, and the determinations for inclusion are described below.

8.1 Gender

Gender is reported on the ADVISER Student template and is used for assessment subgroup calculation from the final value reported at the end of the reporting period (June 30).

Subgroup values and codes are:

1. Male (M)
2. Female (F)

8.2 Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity is reported on the ADVISER Student template and is used for assessment subgroup calculation from the final values reported at the end of the reporting period (June 30).

Race/Ethnicity is reported in a two-question format. How these questions are used to determine Race/Ethnicity can be found in “The Nebraska Guide to Implementing New Federal Race and Ethnicity Categories for Students and Staff” at <https://www.education.ne.gov/dataservices/adviser-resources/> Subgroup values and codes are:

1. American Indian or Alaska Native (AM)
2. Asian (AS)
3. Black or African American (BL)
4. Hispanic (HI)
5. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (PI)
6. White (WH)
7. Two or More Races (MU)

8.3 Special Education

Special Education status is reported in the ADVISER. Rules and guidance for inclusion of a student in special education can be found in the Special Education rules at <https://www.education.ne.gov/sped/regulationspolicies/>. Students are included in the Special Education subgroup if they are (1) reported in the Special Education Snapshot template (2) with an Entry Date before the closing of the respective test window and (3) with an Exit Date that is either left blank or is after the opening of the respective test window. Any student that meets all three criteria is included in the Special Education subgroup.

8.4 Free and Reduced Lunch

For students who are not attending a school that participates in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), Free and Reduced lunch status is reported on the ADVISER Student template and is used for assessment subgroup calculation from the final value reported at the end of the reporting period (June 30). For students who are attending a school that participates in CEP, those students who are directly certified as Free Lunch any time during the school year by the NDE Nutrition Services team are included in the Free and Reduced Lunch subgroup for assessment calculations. For more information on CEP, see <https://www.education.ne.gov/ns/forms-resources/national-school-lunch-program/community-eligibility-provision-cep/>.

8.5 English Learner

English Learner status is determined from fields reported on the ADVISER Student template and is used for assessment subgroup calculation from the final value reported at the end of the reporting period (June 30). Students who are flagged as English Learner Eligible are included in the English Learner subgroup. Students who are flagged as Redesignated English Fluent and whose redesignation was in the last four years are also included in this subgroup. Longitudinal student information is used to determine which students were redesignated within the last four years.

8.6 Migrant

Migrant status is determined from information collected in the MIS 2000 system by the Migrant Education Office. Any student included in the system during the school year will be considered Migrant for assessment purposes.

8.7 Homeless

Student Homeless program status is reported in the ADVISER. Any student reported in the Homeless program group any time during the school year will be considered Homeless for assessment purposes.

8.8 Unaccompanied Youth

Unaccompanied Youth status is reported in ADVISER as a subset under the Student Homeless program. Any student considered Unaccompanied Youth any time during the school year should be reported as such. The value will be determined from the final value reported at the end of the reporting period (June 30).

8.9 Highly Mobile

Highly Mobile status is determined from information reported on the ADVISER School Enrollment template and is based on the number of schools a student is enrolled in during the school year. Determination of Highly Mobile status for a student is made by NDE staff, based on enrollment records reported by the school district.

8.10 Military Parent

Military Parent status is determined from information reported on the ADVISER School Enrollment template. The value will be determined from the final value reported at the end of the reporting period (June 30).

8.11 Foster

Foster status is determined from information received from the Department of Health and Human Services. Any student considered foster during the school year will be included in the Foster subgroup.

8.12 Recently Arrived English Learners

Although not a reporting subgroup, Recently Arrived English Learners are identified for AQuESTT calculations. The Immigrant Indicator value used to decide this status will be determined from the final value reported at the end of the appropriate reporting period (June 30 of the current and preceding school year).

- Students with an ADVISER Student template Immigrant Indicator field value of “1 – Immigrant < 1 year (new immigrant)” will be considered Recently Arrived Year 1.
- Students with an ADVISER Student template Immigrant Indicator field value of “2 – Immigrant >= 1 year but <= 3 complete school years” and who had the Immigrant Indicator value of “1” in the previous school year will be considered Recently Arrived Year 2.