



**Independent School District #1
Aitkin Public Schools**

“A community in continuous pursuit of educational excellence for all.”

March 4, 2026

Dear parents/guardians:

This letter is to inform you that your student(s) will be taking the 2026 Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA). The MCAs are MN state tests in reading, mathematics, and science that help districts measure student progress toward Minnesota’s academic standards and also meet federal and state legislative requirements.

The MCA tests will be given on the following days at Aitkin High School:

7th and 8th grade - Reading	April 15th (morning, pd. 1-4)
10th grade - Reading	April 15th (morning, pd. 1-3)
7th, 8th, and 11th grade - Math	April 22nd (morning, pd. 1-3)
8th grade - Science	April 29th (morning)
10th grade - Science	April 28th and 29th (during Biology classes)

The MCA tests will be given on the following days at Rippleside Elementary:

3rd-6th grade, Reading	April 14-16 (morning)
3rd-6th grade, Math	April 21-23 (morning)
5th grade, Science	April 28 and 29 (morning)

Information from statewide tests is used in a number of ways. The state uses the aggregated test scores to report how Minnesota students are performing in school to the public and the U.S. Department of Education. Statewide test data helps the state evaluate the progress schools are making in reducing achievement gaps among student groups. Schools and districts use the assessment results to measure their progress in improving student learning over time. Educators use individual scores to gauge students’ relative strengths and areas of need, as a data point for determining student need for academic intervention, as well as, use aggregated results to adjust curriculum and instruction. Parents use the scores in their decision-making process when choosing schools for their children. Parents, students, and educators may also use test results to determine whether or not students are on-track for success in future grade levels, college, and careers. For these reasons, ensuring the integrity of statewide testing data is an important and shared responsibility, but can be opted-out with a form available at isd1.org.

Ways you can help during the state assessments:

- Ensure your child charges and brings their laptop/iPad
- Have your child bring their own corded headphones (not bluetooth compatible because it is prohibited by MDE)
- Have your child bring a book to read for after the test
- Ensure your child is well-rested and eats a healthy breakfast
- Encourage your child to try their very best and answer all the questions

Please contact me if you have any questions regarding our upcoming MCA testing.

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