NSCAS NEBRASKA STUDENT-CENTERED ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

2023–2024 Schedule Guidance for NSCAS Growth and NSCAS Science

The 2023–2024 NSCAS Growth Assessment Windows:

Test Administration/Important Dates	Dates
Fall:	
Acacia Manage Available	August 7, 2023
Test Tickets Available	August 7, 2023
Test Window - ELA & Math Grades 3–8	August 21, 2023–September 29, 2024
Winter:	
Acacia Manage Available	November 13, 2023
Test Tickets Available	November 16, 2023
Test Window - ELA & Math Grades 3–8	December 4, 2023–January 26, 2024 (Note: holiday downtime Dec. 25–Jan. 1 and Jan. 15)
Spring:	
Acacia Manage Available	March 4, 2024
Test Tickets Available	March 11, 2024
Test Window - ELA & Math Grades 3–8, Science Grades 5 & 8	April 1, 2024–May 10, 2024

The following guidelines are intended to support districts and schools in scheduling the online administration of the NSCAS Growth assessment.

The NSCAS Growth online assessment is untimed and designed to provide students with as much time as needed to complete each content area.

Testing Times

The table below lists the number of test questions per content area and the recommended time needed for most students for each content area. Recommended times were based on averages from the previous test administrations. Some students may require more time than others. When scheduling test sessions, these variances should be considered.

Grade Level	Content Area	Fall/Winter Approx number of test questions*	Spring Approx number of test questions*	Recommended Scheduled testing time
3 – 8	Mathematics	40	45	90 minutes
3 – 8	English Language	40	45	90 minutes
5	Science	NA	35-38	60 minutes
8	Science	NA	37-39	60 minutes

Tests Session Recommendations

Due to the adaptive nature of the NSCAS Growth assessments, students will be required to answer

each test question before a new question is presented. At any point during the test session, proctors can end the test session, which will pause the students' assessment. Later or on another day, the proctor can start a subsequent test session, and students can resume testing. This functionality provides schools with flexibility in scheduling test sessions.

Data gathered from the previous test administrations suggests that optimal performance is achieved when students are provided two to three test sessions over a period no longer than 5 days. For example, given the 90-minute estimated test-taking time, a school may decide to schedule two 45-minute sessions or three 30-minute sessions. While allowable, it is not recommended that students complete a test in a single session.

When scheduling test sessions, please consider the following:

- The estimated test-taking time does not include test ticket distribution, starting the test session, launching the secure browsers, and student log-in.
- Younger students will be more likely to need multiple test sessions.
- Within a test session, tests for individual students can be paused at any time.
- Additional sessions can be created for students that may need additional time.
- After 14.5 minutes of inactivity, the student will receive an inactivity warning on their screen and then be automatically logged out of the test.
- Test sessions can be scheduled at any time during the school day but be cautious of starting late in the afternoon.
- Schools should prioritize student needs and not adult convenience when building a testing schedule. Proctors should not pace students. All schedules need to account for students that may need additional time to complete the test.
- Due to the adaptivity in the NSCAS Growth ELA assessment, the number of passages each student encounters will vary from 4 to 7 passages.
- Proctors for the NSCAS Growth ELA assessment can provide students with a time warning to help avoid having students read half a passage and then having time run out. Districts may give students a ten-minute warning and/or a five-minute warning, such as: "Students, there are ten minutes left. Do not start another passage." and/or "Students, there are five minutes left. Do not start a new passage."
- Proctors for the NSCAS Science can provide students with a time warning to help avoid having students begin a new task and then having time run out. Districts may give students a ten-minute warning and/or a five-minute warning, such as: "Students, there are ten minutes left. Do not start another task." and/or "Students, there are five minutes left. Do not start a new task."
- There may be scheduled downtime for maintenance and product updates. These will be communicated to all districts in advance of the test window.
- Balancing test time and instruction is important. Most students should not need more than 3 hours to complete one subject. Districts may stop a student at 3 hours unless educators feel there is an educationally valid reason to continue and one of the following is true:
    - The student is still actively engaged in testing.
    - The student has a documented need for extended time.
    - The student requests additional time.