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What are the MCAs?

The purpose of the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments-Series II (MCA-II) is to measure Minnesota students' achievement on the Minnesota Academic Standards. These tests meet the requirements of No Child Left Behind. The reading and math tests are used to determine whether schools and districts have made adequate yearly progress (AYP) toward all students being proficient in 2014.

The reading and Mathematics MCA-IIs are paper and pencil assessments aligned to the 2003 MN academic standards. Students in grades 3-8 enrolled at public schools in MN take this test each spring in reading and math. Fifth and 8th graders take the science MCAs, too.

The MCA-II results can be used to inform curriculum decisions at the school and classroom level.



Director's Notes

JULY 1, 2010

2010 MCA Report

Cologne Academy's 2010 results on the MCAs report that 86.25% of all 3rd –6th grade students earned proficiency in Reading and 78.75% earned proficiency in Mathematics. I am extremely pleased with the results of the MCAs and proud of the students' accomplishments this year (see also the NWEA article on page 2). These results are a testament to the professional skills, talents, and perseverance of the entire staff of educators here at Cologne Academy.

Several factors come into consideration when trying to interpret these results. When analyzing the results, we look at what resident district our students come from, if they have been home schooled, socio-economic factors, educational label in one or more of the 13 Federal categories for special education, and how long they have been a student at Cologne Academy and exposed to Core Knowledge Curriculum.

All of these factors are significant in our small school, where one student accounts for a high percentage of the overall proficiency rating. Cologne Academy averages 20 students in each grade and each student accounts for 5 percentage points in the grade level score. Compare this to most traditional district schools that have 100-300 students in each grade level and each student accounts for 1% or less of the total grade level score.

The staff will spend 2 days this summer in a data retreat, analyzing the MCA results and the NWEA MAP scores. We will make continuous improvement plans for the school using this wealth of data to drive educational decisions and continue to produce high academic results. Please don't hesitate to call me at the school or email me at lgluck@cologneacademy.org with specific questions.

Accountability

Each new school year, every teacher welcomes a new classroom of students and the wide variety of learning needs unique to each student. This environment gives rise to the challenges and opportunities teachers and schools have to personalize each student's learning that will result in the success of each student.

As a school, Cologne Academy engages in ongoing improvement efforts at the board, administration, staff, and student levels. This ongoing improvement involves examining our practices, processes, and results. We identify both student and professional learning needs.

Our goal and desire to produce high academic goals are aligned with our authorizer's, Friends of Education, goals for : (1) improving student learning; (2) increasing learning opportunities for students; (3) encouraging the use of different and innovative teaching methods; (4) establishing new forms of accountability for schools, and; (5) creating new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program.

This fall begins Cologne Academy's third year of educating students. We are busy working on developing our new Middle School

Concept as our student body grows older. Our middle school theme -*You don't know what you don't know*- is aimed at providing an education that will foster and encourage our students to seek knowledge and desire to inquire at a higher level.

Our new building will be ready for the students when we come back together this fall. From our 54 new kindergartens to our expanding 7th grade, all will be welcomed into an environment that is focused on being accountable for academic gains in all students.

What are the NWEA MAP tests?

Northwestern Educational Association's Measures of Academic Progress are assessment the measure each student's academic growth from fall of the school year to the spring. It was created by educators for educators, MAP assessments provide detailed, actionable data about where each child is on their unique learning path. One of the many goals we have for our students and a goal parents should have for their child is for the child to attain one year's academic growth each school year. This test also measures the likelihood of the student to pass the MCAs.

This year's results for Cologne Academy indicated that 85% of all of our students made one year's academic growth. The differences between the MCA and MAP test are:

- 1) MCA's measure proficiency against a standard (in this case MN State Standards)
- 2) MAP measures personal growth.

No matter where your child is at (proficient in State standards or not) they should still have a year's worth of learning and growth.

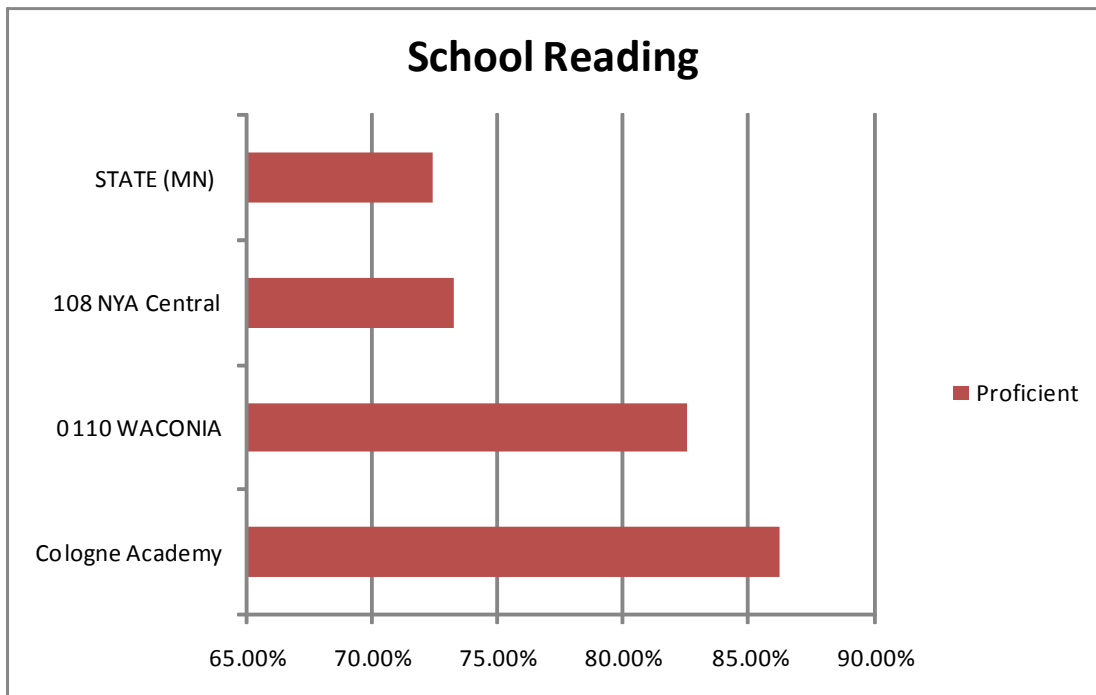
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2010 MCA Report

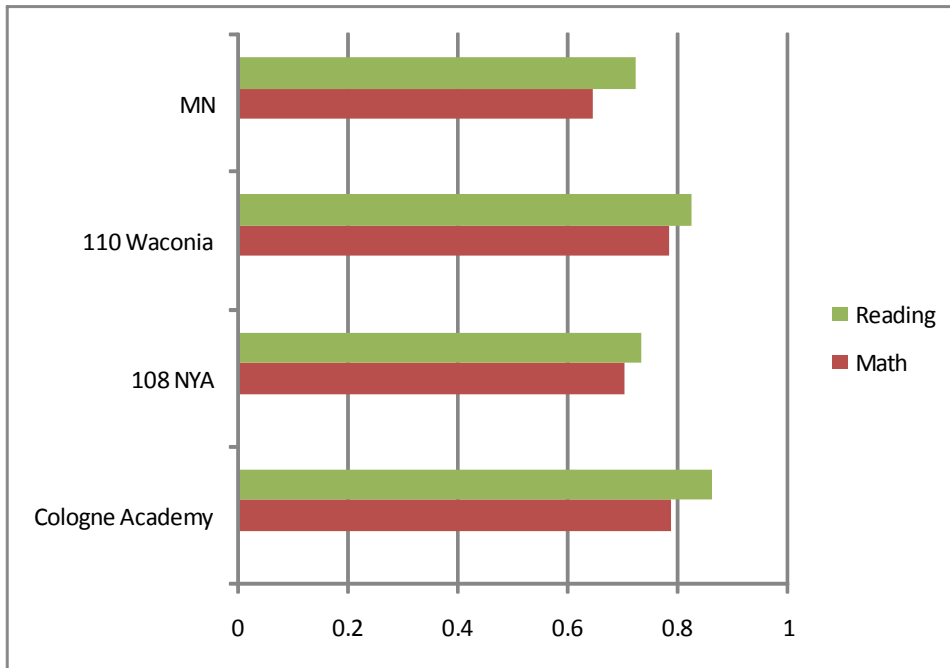
Cologne Academy sets high academic goals for all students. These goals are accomplished by the school's dedication and commitment to use data to drive instructional decisions and the school's efforts to develop teachers to be reflective and effective educators. Cologne Academy provides continuous and ongoing professional development opportunities so that the teachers can become more skilled and knowledgeable in their profession and this, in turn, impacts the students abilities to learn.

With all testing, it is critical to understand the purpose of the test, how to interpret the results, and most importantly, how to use the results to make purposeful and thoughtful actions based on the results. The MCAs are Minnesota's high stakes tests. These measure how proficient students perform against MN state standards. Schools across the nation all use NWEA MAP, another form of assessment, to measure student academic growth (NWEA article on page 2).

While data can be read many different ways, the media coverage on the MCAs does not tell the whole story about unique student populations, enrollment, or trends over time. The media will give a topical overview which gives the public a bird's eye view. This newsletter will provide a more in-depth analysis in order to assist our community in interpretation of the data and its implications for students and staff.



2009-2010 MCA School Wide Results



Grade Level Proficiency

3rd	Math	Reading
08-09	94.73%	88.88%
09-10	86.95%	100.00%
108	88.05%	80.59%
110	93.65%	90.33%
MN	80.89%	76.23%

4th	Math	Reading
08-09	89.47%	84.21%
09-10	85.00%	80.00%
108	77.50%	76.25%
110	94.95%	88.99%
MN	75.07%	72.52%

5th	Math	Reading
08-09	57.14%	50.00%
09-10	69.56%	78.26%
108	70.58%	69.11%
110	84.16%	89.58%
MN	67.18%	76.32%

6th	Math	Reading
08-09	n/a	n/a
09-10	71.42%	85.71%
108	79.41%	76.47%
110	70.03%	79.37%
MN	67.45%	71.66%

Shown above is Cologne Academy's 2-year data and 09-10 local district data, by grade level. What is not shown, but valuable in the interpretation, is how local district results trend. There is fluctuation from year to year across the grades in all districts. What is important is to analyze these trends over the years and ensure the schools are implementing instructional practices to ensure proficiency across the grades. Cologne Academy has been and will continue to pursue the statistical analysis in these results to make meaningful decisions about our curriculum implementation and design.

As our population and enrollment begin to settle in the next five years, our results should begin to follow a steady upward progression line. When our grade levels hit 50 students starting in 2011-12 in 3rd grade, each student will account for 2.5% of the total proficiency instead of 5%. Cologne Academy, as compared to surrounding districts, will always have a smaller sample size and thus we will also consider look at normalized data (last page) and, as always, looking at other forms of student achievement (NWEA, DIBELS, classroom assessments, other curricular content area) to assess our academic programming.

As a school, Cologne Academy ranks in the top 10% of schools nationwide based on the percentage of student's achieving one year's academic growth.

Of special interest:

- 1) 92% of our special education population made one year's worth of academic growth this school year (Our percentage of SpEd population compared to total enrollment is comparable to the surrounding district's.)
- 2) Of this group of students, 33% were proficient in Math and 50% were proficient in Reading.

Our focus will be to continue to make one year's growth for our special education population and close the discrepancy gap between where they are currently achieving and the MN state standards. Closing this gap will help the school achieve more consistent scores over time.

We will also focus our efforts to address the 15% of our students who need an accelerated learning path. These students are allowed to accelerate with our MUM and MUR classrooms, but we are also investigating ways to enrich their learning. Finding assessment tools that can accommodate this type of learner is also a need, as MAP testing is not always the best measure for this unique population of students to show valid results.

Transportation Update

Since November of 2009, the transportation committee has been working hard to improve the school's transportation services to all students. Last Thursday, the school board voted in favor of contracting for busing services for the 2010-2011 school year and signed a one-year contract with Positive Connections. We hope the joint efforts between our school district and the busing company will be mutually beneficial.

While routes will not be finalized until August, in-district (district 108) students will continue to be serviced. Positive Connections has made similar stops and with less transit time for those who live closer to school. Our out-of-district families will have satellite stops in Carver, Chaska, and Waconia, as well as, stops at many out-of-district student's residences.

The transportation committee will be finalizing the fee structure for our out-of-district students. You will be notified by mail in July. Final routes will be mailed to families at the end of August by Positive Connections.

Staffing Update

We will have several new faces among our staff when we return to school this fall. The Interview Committee has been busy screening and interviewing high-qualified teachers for vacant positions. Cologne Academy is pleased to announce two new staff members:

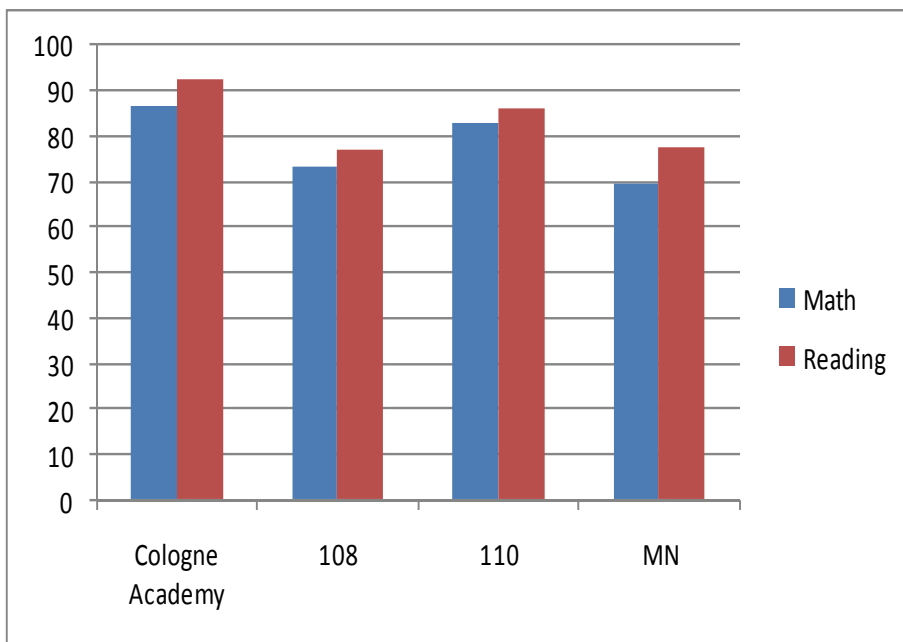
Christopher Johnson, a northern Minnesota native, will join our middle school team as the 7th grade teacher. He holds a K-6 elementary license and a 5-8 Mathematics license.

Laura Christoff Doyle has accepted our Lead Special Education teacher. She has many years of experience in this field and is a charter school veteran who will add much experience to our school. She holds licenses in SLD and EBD.

We wish the best of luck to Erin Stueber as she teaches kindergarten closer to home in Le Sueur and Matt Finnesgard as he fulfills his desire to work with high school students with special needs.



Normalized Data



This data represents normalized data. This information, available on MDE's website shows results across districts without students on IEPs. This data, when used with other assessments, confirms the need to analyze data and make educational adjustments to meet the needs of all of our learners.

Upcoming Dates

Cologne Glad Days
July 30 and 31

Ribbon Cutting Ceremony & Back To School Family Picnic
Wednesday, August 25th
6:30pm

Pre Conferences
September 1st—all day

Middle School Informational meeting
September 1st 6:00PM

