

CSCA 2025-26 Assessment Calendar

Testing Description and Dates:

DIBELS ® (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) is a set of procedures and measures for assessing the acquisition of literacy skills. DIBELS 8th Edition represents the culmination of decades of research into supporting students in becoming successful readers.

WIDA ACCESS for English Learners (ELLs) is an annual assessment that measures students' English language proficiency in kindergarten through grade 12. The assessment is given in four domains: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It's designed to evaluate what students know and can do in English, rather than requiring them to study. Educators use the results to inform their decisions about students' education. For example, they can use the scores as benchmarks to measure future performance, or to help decide if a student can leave English language support services.

NWEA - The Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) is a not-for-profit organization committed to helping school districts throughout the nation improve learning for all students. NWEA partners with more than 2,200 school districts representing more than three million students. As a result of NWEA tests, educators can make informed decisions to promote a child's academic growth.

CMAS - The Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) are a series of statewide tests that measure students' progress in grades 3–12 in English language arts (ELA), math, science, and social studies. The tests are standards-based and are intended to show how well students have mastered the Colorado Academic Standards (CAS). CMAS results can also help teachers identify which skills students have learned and where they need more help.

The Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) is a multiple-choice test that measures a student's reasoning skills and academic aptitude. It's often used as an entrance exam for gifted programs in schools and is available for grades K–12. The test is administered in groups and can be taken on a computer or on paper. The CogAT is not an IQ test, but instead focuses on reasoning skills that are relevant to school success.

Purpose of Assessments:

The purpose of the assessments that CSCA participates in (DIBELS, WIDA/ACCESS, NWEA, CMAS, COGAT) is to use the results to reflect upon the progress of individual students as well as to improve the programs we offer to our students. Details about this reflection are contained in our Unified Improvement Plan (UIP). How the CDE uses these test results is found on their website and is included in part below.

How are schools, districts and educators held accountable for the test results?

Colorado's education accountability system is based on the belief that every student should receive an excellent education and graduate ready to succeed in careers or in

college. Successful schools and districts are recognized and serve as models, while those whose students struggle are identified for support.

Specifically, schools are identified for support and improvement under various state and federal laws that look at performance on several indicators.

Schools, districts and educators are expected to use the results to reflect upon the education program and progress of individual students to improve attainment for students. Part of this work is done through the Unified Improvement Plan.

Funding is **never** withheld from schools or districts based on low test scores. Instead, increased funding is available to support school and district improvement in places where students are struggling.

Schools' overall performance is evaluated by looking at scores on assessments, measuring how well students are growing academically year to year and seeing how well they are preparing students for success after high school. Under this measure, districts and schools are given performance ratings. Those that need additional support (e.g., grants, specialized programming) for improvement are also identified.

If a school or district has been consistently underperforming on multiple measures (e.g., achievement on state assessments, growth, graduation rates, dropout rates, matriculation rates) for five years or more, the State Board of Education must direct the local board of education to take a more drastic measure to improve performance for students.

Additionally, schools with lower graduation rates on the four-year and sevenyear cycle may be identified for additional support. Schools are also examined for how well they are serving students from specific groups on academic achievement and academic growth, how well they are being prepared for life after high school, and whether they are chronically absent. These specific groups of students include English learners, students with disabilities, those who are economically disadvantaged and students with individual race and ethnicities.

State assessment results may be used as part of an educator's evaluation, as a measure of student growth in the current school year only if results are received two weeks prior to the end of school. If results are not received at least two weeks before the end of school, the assessments may be used as prior-year data for the following year.

2025-26 Assessment Calendar:

WIDA Access – January 12th to February 13th, 2026

NWEA – Fall – August 15th to November 30th, 2025

Winter – December 1, 2025 to February 28th, 2026

Spring – March 1st to May 29, 2026

CMAS – April 6th to April 24th, 2026

CoGAT – October 6th to October 10th

DIBELS – BOY – September 2nd to September 12th

MOY – December 1st to December 12th

EOY – April 27th to May 8th