Appropriate and Inappropriate Uses of Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) Results

**Appropriate**

- **Look at overall proficiency for a grade, school and/or district**
  Why: To evaluate equitable opportunities for all students to learn the Minnesota Academic Standards

- **Compare results across student groups**
  Why: To help determine where there may be underlying inequities and highlight promising instructional practices

- **Look at changes in achievement level results over time**
  Why: To support the evaluation of curriculum and district/classroom assessments that reflect the rigor of the standards

- **Use as one of multiple data points for school and district decision-making**
  Why: To strengthen the connection between the district’s comprehensive assessment system and evidence-based decision making

**Inappropriate**

- **Use as a mandatory indicator for program placement**
  For example: Making decisions about gifted and talented programming

- **Focus only on individual student scores for planning and instruction**
  For example: Making a decision based on an individual student’s results and not the group as a whole

- **Use scale scores to calculate individual student growth**
  For example: Subtracting scale scores and interpreting the differences as a measure of progress

- **Use results, in isolation, to prioritize which students receive instructional support**
  For example: Using results as the only criteria for decisions like intervention programming

- **Use in isolation to evaluate teacher effectiveness**
  For example: Only using MCA scores and no local considerations or data

Questions?
Contact Academic Standards, Instruction and Assessment at mde.testing@state.mn.us.