



Academic Excellence: Rigor, Results & Continuous Improvement

Prior Lake-Savage Area School
October 2026

Minnesota Standards: Core 4 Changes & Timeline

What changed in the standards — and when full implementation is expected



We are here

Science

2019 Standards

Full implementation:
2024–25

English Language Arts

2020 Standards

Full implementation:
2025–26

Social Studies

2021 Standards

Full implementation:
2026–27

Mathematics

2022 Standards

Full implementation:
2027–28

Science



2019 standards

- Phenomena and real-world problems drive learning.
- 3D learning: practices, crosscutting concepts, and core ideas.
- Less isolated facts; more investigation, modeling, and explanation.

English Language Arts



2020 standards

- Three strands: Reading, Writing, and LSVEI.
- Media literacy is included across learning.
- Stronger expectations for discussion, communication, and evidence.

LSVEI = Listening, Speaking, Viewing and Exchanging Ideas.

Social Studies



2021 standards

- Inquiry and civic reasoning are central.
- Ethnic Studies is embedded as a fifth strand.
- Greater emphasis on multiple perspectives and disciplinary literacy.

Mathematics



2022 standards

- Three strands: Data & Probability, Spatial Reasoning, and Patterns & Relationships.
- Rigor balances conceptual understanding, application, and procedural fluency.
- Greater emphasis on reasoning, modeling, and problem solving.

Understanding MCA Performance Levels

A simplified view of Minnesota's performance level descriptors.



Performance level descriptors describe the knowledge and skills students typically demonstrate at each level. **Meets** and **Advanced** are considered proficient.

BEGINNING



Student uses pieces of grade-level learning.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE:

May recall information or use isolated skills in straightforward situations, but performance is not yet consistent.

INTERMEDIATE



Student applies some grade-level learning in familiar situations.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE:

Can make connections and use some strategies, but reasoning, evidence, or application may be incomplete.

MEETS



Student applies and connects grade-level learning to reason, solve, and explain.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE:

Demonstrates the knowledge and skills expected by the standards in appropriately complex tasks.

ADVANCED



Student uses grade-level learning strategically and flexibly in more complex situations.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE:

Integrates ideas, justifies thinking with evidence, and transfers understanding to unfamiliar or non-routine contexts.

Increasing complexity, reasoning, independence, and transfer.

PLSAS 2026 Math MCA – District Overview

Comparison districts: Lakeville, Eden Prairie, Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan, and Shakopee



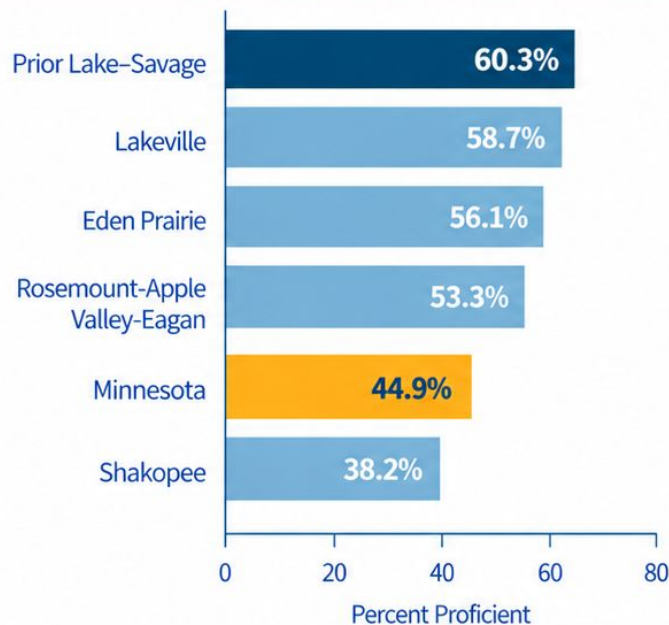
Prior Lake-Savage

60.3%
Proficient

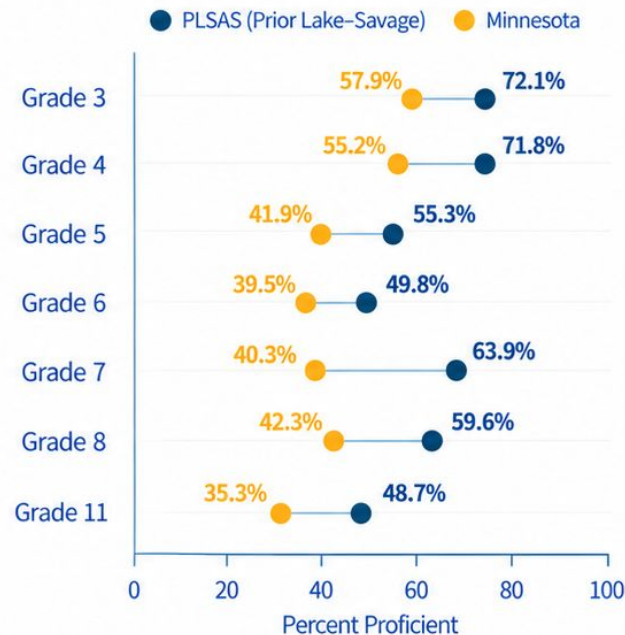
**Highest overall math
proficiency in this
comparison group**

+15.4 points
above Minnesota

Overall Proficiency



PLSAS by Tested Grade



PLSAS 2026 Bright Spot – Grade 7 Math

Two-year growth and peer leadership



Key Result

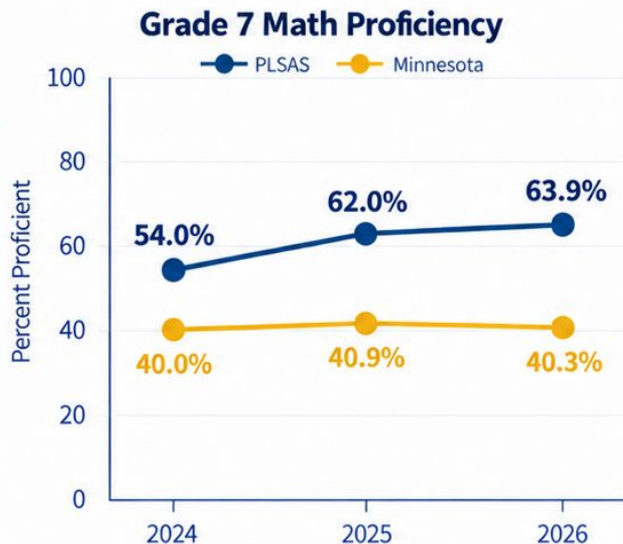
63.9% Proficient

Highest among
comparison districts

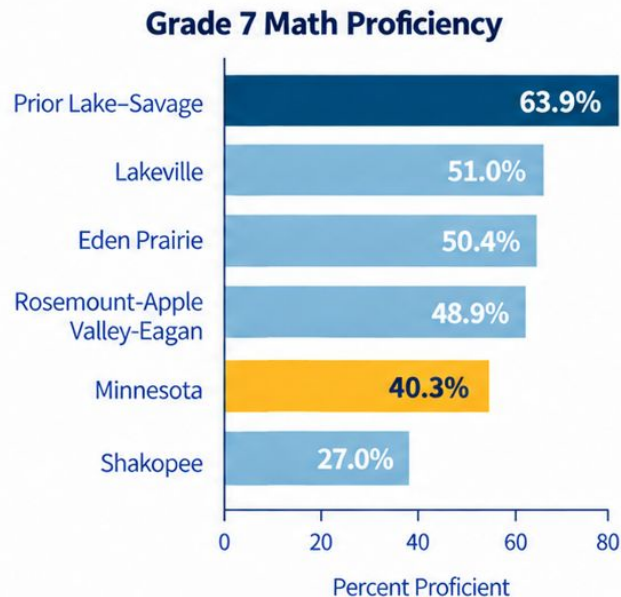
+23.6 points
above Minnesota

Up 9.9 points
in two years

PLSAS Growth



2026 Comparison



Source: 2026 MCA public results; 2024–2025 PLSAS trend from district public reporting.

PLSAS 2026 Reading MCA – District Overview

Comparison districts: Lakeville, Eden Prairie, Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan, and Shakopee



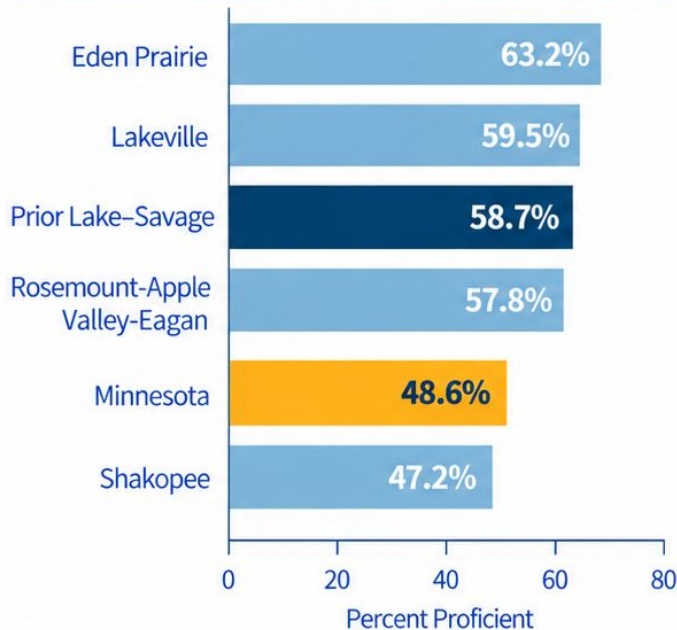
Prior Lake-Savage

58.7%
Proficient

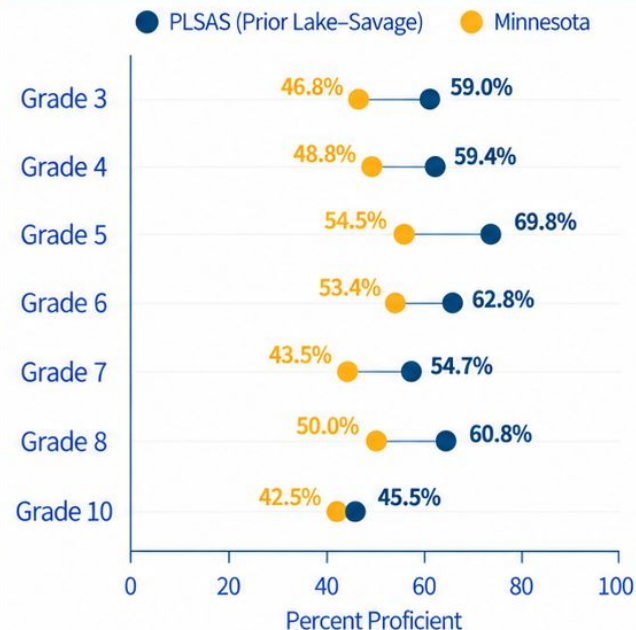
**Strong overall
reading performance**

**+10.1 points
above Minnesota**

Overall Proficiency



PLSAS by Tested Grade



Source: 2026 MCA public results

PLSAS 2026 Science MCA – District Overview

Comparison districts: Lakeville, Eden Prairie, Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan, and Shakopee



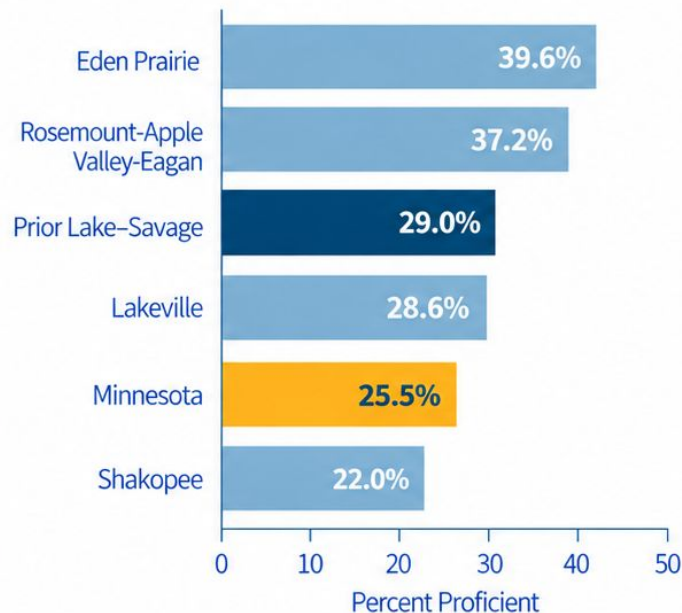
Prior Lake-Savage

**29.0%
Proficient**

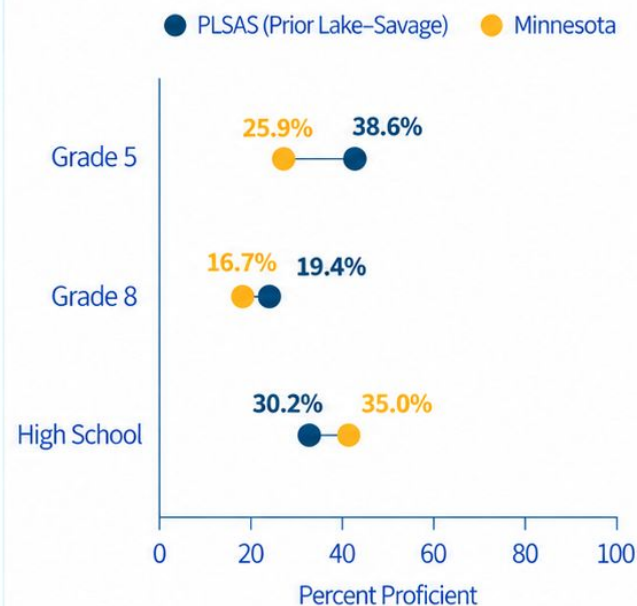
**Above Minnesota
overall in science**

**+3.5 points
above Minnesota**

Overall Proficiency



PLSAS by Tested Grade



MCA, ACT, and AP: A Similar Target

How these assessments can help define the level of student understanding we want instruction to target



Shared target: students demonstrate grade-level or college-ready understanding through reasoning, application, explanation, and independent work.

1



MCA

- Achievement Level Descriptors show what grade-level performance looks like.
- Meets = students consistently demonstrate grade-level knowledge and skills.
- Advanced = students apply learning with greater depth, precision, and independence.

Use as a target for grade-level rigor.

2



ACT

- Benchmarks indicate readiness for college-level coursework.
- On-target performance requires students to read closely, reason, solve problems, and explain.
- ACT can help calibrate the level of complexity students should handle independently.

Use as a target for readiness and complexity.

3



AP

- AP targets success with rigorous, college-level content and tasks.
- Strong performance requires analysis, evidence, problem solving, and clear communication.
- AP helps define the level of challenge and independence needed for advanced learning.

Use as a target for advanced application and transfer.

What they have in common

- ✓ Reasoning, not recall alone
- ✓ Application of learning
- ✓ Use of evidence and explanation

- ✓ Independent performance on complex tasks



Instructional implication: If classroom tasks, questions, and assessments align to these expectations, students are more likely to reach Meets/Advanced on MCA, readiness on ACT, and success on AP.

Cumulative Instructional Time: PLSAS vs. Peer Districts

Estimated additional instructional time by graduation compared with PLSAS, based on **both student days/year and typical instructional minutes/day**.



Two drivers of the gap:



More student days per year



More minutes per day

PLSAS Baseline



165

student days/year



390–410 min/day
varies by level



K-12 cumulative instructional time

857,670
total minutes

Used as the comparison point.

Minnetonka



170

student days/year



400 min/day

Cumulative advantage
over PLSAS by graduation

+26,330
minutes

~67 extra PLSAS days

Stillwater



170

student days/year



about **410–420**
min/day

Cumulative advantage
over PLSAS by graduation

+35,510
minutes

~89 extra PLSAS days

Wayzata



173

student days/year

Largest gap



400–425 min/day

Cumulative advantage
over PLSAS by graduation

+72,205
minutes

~180 extra PLSAS days



Bottom Line: Peer districts provide a cumulative time advantage over PLSAS, with Wayzata's gap equal to about **1.1 extra school years** by graduation — driven by **more days/year and more minutes/day**.

From Alignment to Impact

Our path to stronger Meets and Advanced performance



Fall 2026



Clarify & Calibrate

- Define what Meets and Advanced look like at each grade level.
- Study standards and student work.
- Establish common expectations for rigor and high-quality tasks.

Winter 2026–27



Strengthen Adult Learning

- Learning teams examine upcoming units, tasks, questions, and assessments.
- Strengthen alignment to grade-level expectations.
- Leaders calibrate walkthrough evidence.

Spring 2027



Monitor & Learn

- Review student work, common assessments, FastBridge, MCA, ACT, and AP evidence.
- Analyze walkthrough trends.
- Identify bright spots and areas needing adjustment.

2027–28



Full Implementation & Refinement

- Continue teacher learning and support.
- Refine instruction based on evidence.
- Fully implement the 2022 Math Standards and transition to Math MCA-IV.

Ongoing



Continuous Improvement

- Repeat the cycle: clarify → strengthen → monitor → adjust.
- More students consistently demonstrating Meets and Advanced levels of understanding.



We are not waiting for a new assessment to raise expectations. We are aligning instruction to the new standards now so students are prepared when the measurement changes.