# The Relationship between *i-Ready Diagnostic* and the 2024 Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) in Mathematics Grades 3–5

**Correlation Brief | March 2025**

## Research Overview

*i-Ready Diagnostic* and the 2024 MCA in Mathematics are highly correlated, with an average spring correlation of .91 in Grades 3–5.

## Sample Summary

Curriculum Associates conducted a study on the relationship between the *i-Ready Diagnostic* and the 2024 MCA for Grades 3–5 in Mathematics. Students came from a total of 3 school districts, one of which is a charter agency (see Table 1). The sample included more than 900 students, with between 292 and 334 students per grade for Mathematics for the spring *i-Ready* assessment (see Table 2).

### Table 1. Demographic Information for Minnesota Districts in Study

| District | Schools Participating | Location | Total Enrollment | % National School Lunch Program | % English Language Learners[1] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 3 | Town (2), Rural (1) | 1,000–1,499 | 45% | <5% |
| 2 | 2 | Town (2) | 600–699 | 30% | 40% |
| 3 | 1 | Suburb (1) | 600–699 | 10% | 20% |
| **Average of Participating Districts[2]** | | | | **28%** | **20%** |
| **Average across All Districts in the State[2]** | | | | **31%** | **13%** |

Note: Demographic data are available at the school and district level and may not precisely describe the study sample. District-specific statistics are provided as ranges or rounded to the nearest five percent in order to ensure the anonymity of participating districts.

[1]Data on English language learners is only available at the district level. Data from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, ED*Facts* file 141, Data Group 678, 2022–2023, extracted November 14, 2024.

[2]Weighted averages.

Data from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "Local Education Agency (School District) Universe Survey", 2022–2023 v.1a. (obtained from https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/pubagency.asp), represent 2022–2023 data, which was the most recent full dataset available from NCES at the time of the study.

### Table 2. Sample Sizes for Correlations
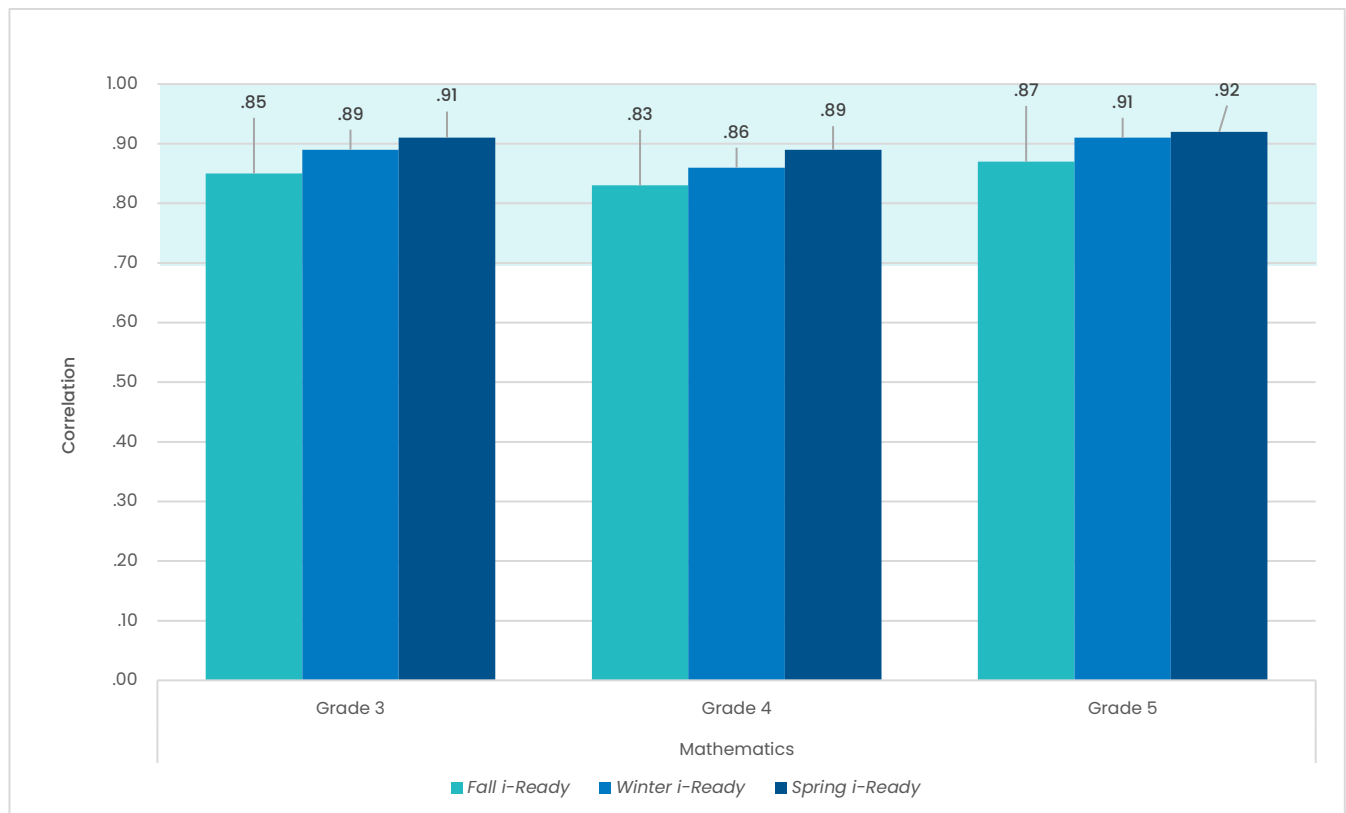
| | Mathematics | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **Fall** | **Winter** | **Spring** |
| **Grade 3** | 336 | 334 | 334 |
| **Grade 4** | 329 | 331 | 330 |
| **Grade 5** | 288 | 295 | 292 |

**i-Ready®**

## Correlation Results

Across Grades 3–5 in Mathematics, results provide evidence for the strong correlation between *i-Ready Diagnostic* and the MCA (see Figure 1). Specifically, spring correlations for Mathematics ranged from .89 for Grade 4 to .92 for Grade 5. These correlations, **all surpassing the .70 standard generally considered to be strong in education research**, provide evidence of a substantial relationship between *i-Ready Diagnostic* and the MCA in Mathematics.

**Figure 1: Correlations Between *i-Ready Diagnostic* Scores and 2024 MCA Mathematics Scores**



## Why Correlations Matter

Correlations are one of the most commonly used and widely accepted forms of validity evidence. Correlations demonstrate that when students score high on one assessment, they also tend to score high on the other, and similarly, when students score low on one assessment, they also tend to score low on the other. A high correlation between two assessments provides evidence that the two assessments are measuring related constructs.

# Percent Proficiency by *i-Ready* Placement Results

To illustrate the relationship between *i-Ready*'s placement levels and MCA proficiency, Figure 2 shows the percentage of students in the study sample who scored Proficient on the 2024 MCA in Mathematics, by grade level and spring *i-Ready* placement level. **Across grades 3–5, most students who scored Mid On Grade Level or higher in *i-Ready* also scored Proficient on the MCA in Mathematics.**

### Figure 2: Percent Proficient on the MCA PM3 by Spring *i-Ready* Placement (Mathematics)