AN UPDATE FROM STATEWIDE TESTING – SEPTEMBER 27, 2017

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2017 Legislative Changes Regarding College Entrance Exams

Recent legislation regarding Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.30, subdivision 1e, changed the reimbursement of college entrance exams. Districts must continue to provide students the opportunity to participate in a college entrance exam on a school day, but individual students are not required to participate. Beginning in 2017–2018, MDE will only reimburse districts for students who are eligible for a free or reduced-price meal.

While a school district may require a student who is not eligible for a free or reduced-price meal to pay the cost of taking a nationally recognized college entrance exam, these charges create barriers to student participation. MDE encourages that whenever possible, fees should be avoided.

A district may not charge a fee to a student who is unable to pay for the college entrance exam. The legislation did not provide for a specific reimbursement to districts for students unable to pay. Further, no criteria was provided to determine ability to pay, so districts can determine who falls in the category of unable to pay. MDE may reimburse districts on a prorated basis for students that are unable to pay for the exam. We will not know if there will be funds available until reimbursements are made for students qualifying for free and reduced-price meals. Districts will indicate in the GRR system those students for which they are requesting reimbursement based on the students unable to pay.

If you have any questions please contact statewide testing at mde.testing@state.mn.us.

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Updates to Scores for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs

On Oct. 5, the Achievement Level field of the District and School Student Results (DSR & SSR) and the Student Assessment History Report for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS will be expanded to three characters to allow a decimal. If your district imports the data into another system that is set up to read the proficiency level as one character, it should be updated to receive three characters.

Note: The information in the Achievement Level field will be the same as what you will see in the Score2 column (for ACCESS), which is the Proficiency Level. For ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, the Achievement Level and the Proficiency Level are the same score. After the change is made, achievement levels for all assessments will be in the same column.

The update will include changes to other columns in the DSR/SSR as well. All the original data will be in the same location in the file, but more fields will have data, and some of the field names will change. These changes are in response to new accountability requirements, new student designations (e.g., Recently Arrived English Learner), and program changes (e.g., use of Quantiles). See table below for a list of the columns that are changing.

COLUMN	OLD COLUMN NAME	NEW COLUMN NAME	COLUMN DESCRIPTION
25	Prior2YearELFlag	PriorELAAccountabilityFLag	Identified as an EL in a prior year
26	Prior2YearSPEFlag	PriorSPEAccountabilityFLag	Identified as SPED in a prior year
29	F11	ForeignExchangeStudentFlag	Foreign Exchange Designation
30	F12	RecentlyArrivedEnglish LearnerFlag	Recently Arrived English Learner Designation
31	F13	ActiveDutyParentFlag	Student with a parent on active military duty
47	FillerC	PriorYearAchievementLevel	The student's prior year achievement level
49	Accommodation Codes	AccommodationLinguistic SupportCodes	Note: Only the column name changed in order to be more descriptive.
157	LexileScore	LexileQuantileScore	Reading Lexile Score or Math Quantile Score
158	LexileScoreRange	LexileQuantileScoreRange	Reading Lexile or Math Quantile range

ISR Distribution and Resources

Individual Student Reports (ISRs) were delivered to districts on Aug. 7. ISRs are the official paper reports that must be provided to families no later than fall conferences. If ISRs have not yet been distributed, districts will need to determine how and when they will provide them. During Pretest Editing in Test WES, districts will confirm the timely delivery of ISRs.

Many helpful ISR resources are available for educators, students, and families to better understand these reports. For MCA and MTAS, visit the Individual Student Reports (ISRs) Resources page (PearsonAccess Next > Reporting Resources > Individual Student Reports (ISRs) Resources). For ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, visit the Scores & Reports page (wida.us > Assessment > ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 > Scores & Reports).

PearsonAccess Next: Changes and Updates

Website Changes

In response to district feedback, MDE and Pearson recently made some layout changes to the PearsonAccess Next website (minnesota.pearsonaccessnext.com). Details will be provided at the New DAC Orientation and the Fall Webinar for DACs. The following are some examples:

- *Test Monitor and Student Directions* have been renamed and have their own page located under the Preparing for Testing tab.
- Past *Assessment Updates* are now posted on PearsonAccess Next, under the MDE Updates tab.
- The recently developed *Teacher Newsletter* is also available under the MDE Updates tab.

Pearson Help Desk

Pearson no longer uses a help desk email and has moved to an online help desk form. Access the link on PearsonAccess Next under Contact Us. The help desk phone number remains unchanged at (888) 817-8659.

Updated Terms and Conditions

Starting Oct. 2, all PearsonAccess Next users will be prompted to agree to recently updated terms and conditions for Pearson systems. Contact the Pearson help desk with any questions.

Resources Available on PearsonAccess Next

WriteToLearn

WriteToLearn (PearsonAccess Next > WriteToLearn (under Quick Links)), an online literacy tool for students in grades 8 and 10, focuses on writing skills and expanded vocabulary. Students receive personalized feedback to encourage, instruct, and reward their progress. DACs can email mnwritetolearn@pearson.com to get started.

Pearson Perspective

Perspective for Educators and Perspective for Families (PearsonAccess Next > Perspective for Educators/Families (under Quick Links)) provide thousands of learning resources aligned to the Minnesota Academic Standards. Teachers can create assignments, build tests, and differentiate resources using Learning Locators. Teachers may use the pass phrase "mn_edu" to sign up. Send questions to Pearson Perspective Support.

Upcoming Training Opportunities

New DAC Orientation

MDE and Pearson are hosting a New DAC (District Assessment Coordinator) Orientation designed for DACs in their first year. Relatively new DACs are also welcome to attend if they think it would be beneficial. For those who cannot make it to an in-person training, there will be a webinar option at a later date. Each session will be from 9 a.m.–3 p.m. with check-in beginning at 8:30 a.m. A light breakfast and lunch will be provided.

DATE & REGISTRATION	LOCATION
Tuesday, Oct. 10 9 a.m.–3 p.m. Register for the St. Cloud orientation.	Courtyard – St. Cloud 5th Ave. Room 404 West Germain St. St. Cloud, MN 56301
Wednesday, Oct. 11 9 a.m.–3 p.m. Register for the Mankato orientation.	Courtyard – Mankato Gallery C/D 901 Raintree Rd. Mankato, MN 56001
Thursday, Oct. 12 9 a.m.–3 p.m. Register for the Roseville orientation.	Minnesota Department of Education Conference Center B: Room CC-15 1500 Hwy 36 West Roseville, MN 55113

Fall Webinar for DACs

MDE will host a webinar for all DACs on Oct. 26, from 10–11 a.m. This webinar will be an overview of some of the changes for 2017–2018 and relevant updates from the state-of-the-state presentation at the A+ Conference. A registration link will be included in a future *Assessment Update*.

Odds and Ends

- **OLPA Reminder**: As announced last year, there is no longer an OLPA administration.

STATEWIDE TESTING: MEASURING EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS IN MINNESOTA

Minnesota Department of Education

education.state.mn.us > Districts, Schools and Educators > Statewide Testing

If you have any questions or want to unsubscribe, please send an email to mde.testing@state.mn.us