

AN UPDATE FROM ACADEMIC STANDARDS, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT — JAN. 10, 2024

QUICK LINKS	IMPORTANT DATES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing for ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS • Test Security Checklist Translated Versions • DAC Test Administration in the Learning Management System • Updates to MTAS Task Administration Manual and Data Collection Form on PearsonAccess Next • Upcoming Opportunities • Odds and Ends • Tech Update 	<p>Jan. 8–March 22: Complete administration tasks in WIDA AMS</p>

Preparing for ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS

WIDA AMS Test Setup

Districts can now complete tasks in WIDA AMS in preparation for ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS testing. Please be aware that updates to WIDA AMS that occurred in the summer of 2023 resulted in some key terminology changes. What was previously known as a *Test Session* is now referred to as a *Registration*. Additionally, the period of time that sites can add or edit registrations for online testing, previously known as the *Test Setup Window*, is now referred to as the *Registration Window* in Test Management. Finally, what was previously known as the *Test Window* is now displayed as the *Assessment Schedule* under the View Registration available results.

Note: While WIDA AMS now refers to test sessions as registrations, these terms are interchangeable. For clarity, the *Procedures Manual* and the *Assessment Update* will continue to refer to test sessions.

WIDA AMS tasks include viewing students in the system and ensuring they appear in the appropriate test sessions; students who were indicated as EL in MARSS (prior to the Dec. 14 deadline) were automatically placed into generic test sessions based on grade cluster and domain.

Detailed instructions are available in the *WIDA AMS User Guide* posted on [WIDA AMS](#) (No log in required. In the second paragraph under the first heading, select “WIDA AMS Library (login not required).” On the Training Materials page, click the Show Documents button to display all documents. From the list of documents, locate the *WIDA AMS User Guide*.) Contact DRC Customer Support with questions at WIDA@DataRecognitionCorp.com or 855-787-9615.

If there are EL students who are missing in WIDA AMS, check the Sent Precode in [Test WES](#) (under the File Transfer heading in the menu on the left). If the student is not included in the file, it means they were not indicated as EL in student enrollment data by the Dec. 14 deadline. Work with your MARSS Coordinator to make sure the student is indicated correctly in enrollment data. These students must also be manually added in WIDA AMS, and any paper materials (such as, writing response booklet) will need to be ordered in WIDA AMS during the additional orders window and hand-bubbled since they will not have a pre-populated student label. When adding students, ensure all student information is entered exactly as it appears in the student enrollment data submitted to MDE. This will prevent ACCESS errors in Posttest Editing stemming from mismatches between hand-bubbled labels and student enrollment records.

ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS Materials Delivery

ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS paper materials will arrive in districts on Jan. 22. It is important that districts have staff available to receive the materials. DACs must ensure there is a plan for receiving the shipments and keeping the test materials secure upon delivery following the district’s procedure.

Student Resources for ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS

Districts should develop a plan to determine which student resources are most applicable to prepare their students for ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS test administration. More specific information is on the [Student Resources page](#).

Selecting Test Administrators and Training Requirements for ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS

The requirements for who can be a Test Administrator are outlined in Chapter 7 of the [Procedures Manual](#). In order to ensure that EL instruction can continue to be provided during testing, selecting Test Administrators may be especially important for ACCESS Online. The administration of the ACCESS Online is similar to the administration of the online MCA and is not required to be administered by EL staff. As a reminder, due to test security and increased incidents of plagiarism, MDE now requires districts to follow WIDA’s group size recommendations for Writing (no more than 15 students per test administrator) and Speaking (no more than

five students per test administrator). For ACCESS Listening and Reading, the guidance continues to be one Test Administrator for every 30 students.

The DAC is responsible for ensuring that all individuals who may be associated with any aspect of test administration or test content receive training on test administration and test security policies and procedures each year prior to testing. This includes the *Test Security Training*, assessment-specific trainings, and district policies and procedures for test administration specific to that district.

All ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS Test Administrators must complete required MDE trainings in the [Learning Management System \(LMS\)](#) each school year. They must also complete the applicable online WIDA Training Courses and certification quizzes in the [WIDA Secure Portal](#) prior to administration of any assessment. Refer to pages 181–191 of the [Procedures Manual](#) for more detailed information.

Special Education Deferred (SPD)

English learners with disabilities should participate in as many domains of the ACCESS or WIDA Alternate ACCESS as possible. If it is impossible to administer one or two domains of the assessment due to the student’s disability (for example, the Listening domain for a deaf student), the Special Education Deferred (SPD) test code is used to document the situation. SPD can be indicated during the testing window or during Posttest Editing.

SPD cannot be used to exempt a student from taking a test. If the student’s disability is such that they cannot participate in any domains of ACCESS with accommodations, the EL staff and IEP or 504 plan team should consider the WIDA Alternate ACCESS. If the EL staff and the IEP or 504 plan team determine that the SPD code is appropriate for more than two domains, contact MDE at mde.testing@state.mn.us for approval.

Alternate ACCESS Test Administrator Scripts: Writing Domain Clarification

WIDA recently identified an issue with the WIDA Alternate ACCESS Test Administrator Scripts. Some WIDA Alternate ACCESS Test Administrator Scripts lack explicit guidance on when to repeat QUESTIONS in the Writing domain or how to utilize the Writing domain word lists.

In response, WIDA has created a new document to make this guidance clearer and more explicit. To access this resource now, visit the Test Domains: Writing module within the *Alternate ACCESS: Administration and Scoring* training course on the [WIDA Secure Portal](#) and select “New: Important Clarification on the Test Administrator Scripts for the Writing Domain.” Additionally, to make sure test administrators have this information, WIDA is taking the following actions:

- Updating the online *Test Administrator Manual* to include specific mention of the word lists.
- Updating the *Alternate ACCESS: Administration and Scoring* training course with additional explicit instructions for both the word lists and repetition of QUESTIONS.
- Sending a direct email message to all test administrators who have completed or enrolled in the WIDA Alternate ACCESS training course.
- Working with DRC to include a clarification sheet in all materials that have not yet been shipped.

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Test Security Checklist Translated Versions

The *Test Security Checklist* has been translated into the three most populous languages in Minnesota: Hmong, Somali, and Spanish. The translated versions and the English version are posted on the [Policies and Procedures](#) page of the PearsonAccess Next website. Districts can provide the translated versions of the *Test Security Checklist* to staff who need the information in those languages.

Note: If you do not see the update, Pearson recommends refreshing your browser and/or clearing your browser's cache.

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DAC Test Administration in the Learning Management System

The *DAC Test Administration Training (2023–24)* is available in the [Learning Management System \(LMS\)](#), and is a required course in the District Assessment Coordinators learning path. For District Assessment Coordinators (DACs) and other staff who attended the live virtual training in December, Pearson has enrolled them in the DAC learning path and marked the training as complete. LMS Learners can download and review their Learning Transcript to confirm the training has been marked complete. If Learners attended the live virtual training and do not see the training appear as complete on their transcript, contact MDE at mde.testing@state.mn.us. DACs who did not attend the live virtual training must complete the course in the LMS.

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Updates to MTAS Task Administration Manual and Data Collection Form on PearsonAccess Next

An error was identified in the Data Collection Form (Appendix B, p. 31) of the MTAS Task Administration Manual. The horizontal dividing line between the entries of Reading Passage 4 and Passage 5 was too faint to indicate a difference in the response sections of the passages. Both the MTAS Task Administration Manual and the standalone Data Collection Form have been updated and can be accessed on [PearsonAccess Next](#) (Resources & Training > User Guides > MTAS User Guides & Administration Resources).

Note: The printed MTAS Task Administration Manuals that will be included in upcoming test materials shipments will not reflect this change. If a new form is needed, Pearson recommends downloading the form at the link above on PearsonAccess Next.

Contact the Pearson help desk with any questions at 888-817-8659 or [submit a Pearson help desk request online](#).

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Upcoming Opportunities

January Q&A Session: Preparing for the Administration of Statewide Assessments (Repeat)

MDE will host a virtual Q&A session for DACs on Jan. 16, from 2–3 p.m. that will focus on test administration and student participation. New and experienced DACs are welcome to attend. [Register for the January Q&A Session](#). Details for joining are provided once participants register.

The prerequisites for the January Q&A session are Chapter 8: Test Administration and Chapter 9: Student Participation and Student in Special Circumstances and Situations of the [Procedures Manual](#).

MDE collects questions from DACs prior to the event to help prepare and find relevant resources to share. After reading the chapters, [submit questions for the January DAC Q&A Session](#). Q&A Sessions will not be recorded nor will CEUs be provided as these are considered additional supports rather than training events.

MTAS Administration 2024 Informational Meeting (Repeat)

Please share the following opportunities with MTAS Test Administrators and Special Education staff in your district.

The Academic Standards, Instruction, and Assessment Division will host informational meetings in January for MTAS Test Administrators and special education staff to hear about upcoming changes and information for this spring's administration of the MTAS. Note: This information meeting does not replace the required MTAS Test Administrator trainings that will be available on the [Learning Management System \(LMS\)](#).

Join us either Jan. 23, 10–11 a.m. or Jan. 25, 4–5 p.m. via Zoom. [Register for the Jan. 23 meeting](#) or [Register for the Jan. 25 meeting](#). A recording of the informational meeting will be available at a later date.

Contact mde.testing@state.mn.us to request accommodations to participate in this event. Note: MDE requests a two-week advance notice to provide accommodations and 48-hour notice to cancel them. If the request comes within two weeks of the event, MDE will still make an effort to provide the accommodation.

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Odds and Ends

MDE Closed for MLK Day

In observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day, MDE offices will be closed on Jan. 15.

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Tech Update

New Introductory Resource for Technology Coordinators

WIDA and DRC have created a resource to support technology coordinators who are new to DRC INSIGHT Online testing software. The document, [Introduction to DRC INSIGHT Technology for WIDA Assessments](#), provides instructions on how to install and manage the various components of DRC INSIGHT. Find this document in the [WIDA Secure Portal](#) under Resources > Technology, or in [WIDA AMS](#) under My Applications > General Information > Documents. DRC sent an email on this resource to Technology Coordinators on Jan. 9.

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ACADEMIC STANDARDS, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT

Minnesota Department of Education

education.mn.gov > District, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Statewide Testing.

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