Assessment Update

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

AN UPDATE FROM ACADEMIC STANDARDS, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT — NOV. 1, 2023

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Release of the MCA Student Readiness Tools (SRTs)

The updated Student Readiness Tools (SRTs) for the 2023–24 school year will be available on Friday, Nov. 3, on the [Student Readiness Tools](#) page of PearsonAccess Next to help prepare students for the online or paper MCA they will be taking. Note: You may need to refresh the page and/or clear your browser's cache to see the updated resources on PearsonAccess Next.

The SRTs were initially released in March 2023 and have been updated to reflect the 2023–24 release. Note: One additional update for a new item type, Equation Editor, will be released in winter 2023–24.

No login information is needed for the online SRTs. Students select their grade level to review videos and practice activities to learn how to navigate within the test, use the tools, and answer question types.

The paper SRTs are available for students taking an MCA paper test. The paper SRTs help students learn to handle the paper test books and how to write their answers to different types of questions. Large print versions are also available. Note: Braille and script resources will be available winter 2023–24.

Educator guides for both the online and paper SRTs are available. Supplemental information for the online SRT tutorials is also available, which provides detailed information about all functionality.

The SRTs have replaced the items samplers and student tutorials as the resources used to familiarize students with the MCA they will be taking. To be prepared for statewide assessments, students need to be familiar with the test format and types of items, rather than the content, since they prepare for the content through daily instruction based on the academic standards. If students are comfortable with the format of the test they will be taking, then they are better prepared to demonstrate what they know and can do during the MCA.

For MTAS, sample Task Administration Manuals, Presentation Pages, and Response Option Cards are available to prepare both Test Administrators and students for test administration. Sample materials are also provided for the tasks being field tested for the upcoming Science and Reading Alternate MCA. SRTs for the new Alternate MCA will be available starting with science in 2024–25.

WIDA and DRC Webinars

WIDA and DRC will be hosting the following webinars in November:

- Pre-Testing: Technology Coordinator Support for Test Administrators, Nov. 7, 1–2 p.m.
- Kindergarten ACCESS for ELLs for New Test Administrators, Nov. 14, 1–2 p.m.
- During Testing: Managing Students in WIDA AMS for ACCESS Online, Nov. 16, 1–2 p.m.
- WIDA Alternate ACCESS for New Test Administrators, Nov. 21, 1–2 p.m.

More information, including the webinar links, can be found in the WIDA Secure Portal on the Webinars page. The recordings for WIDA Q&A Webinars are posted to the WIDA Secure Portal on the Webinars page within a week of the presentation.

MDE Employment Opportunities (repeat)

The Academic Standards, Instruction and Assessment division is currently seeking candidates for a number of positions to support the division in providing high quality standards, instruction, and assessment. All postings are currently open now until Nov. 14, with the exception of the Academic Standards Team Supervisor, which closes Nov. 15.

Academic Standards Team Supervisor, Job ID 70772. This position exists to ensure the high-quality revision of academic standards and support schools' and districts' standards-based instruction. This position is ultimately responsible for managing the standards revision process processes including scheduling, coordination with outside parties, and participating in rulemaking.

Communication Program Management Supervisor, Job ID 70766. This position is responsible for overseeing the development of resources, training, and effective and timely communication to districts and to the public regarding the academic and English language statewide assessments. The position monitors activities and deliverables associated with the assessments.

Data, Reporting and Test Integrity Supervisor, Job ID 70764. This position ensures the high quality of psychometric, data analysis, reporting, and research activities to assure current and newly-developed statewide assessment are quality assessments, assessment results are reported accurately and research is conducted in a timely and meaningful manner. This position is ultimately responsible for managing the scoring and reporting processes, including scheduling and coordination with outside assessment vendors.

Operations Manager, Job ID 70759. This position exists to manage activities associated with providing the highest level of quality to the Minnesota Assessment System. This includes monitoring and executing multiple assessment vendor contracts to ensure consistency and error-free production, distribution, administration, and scoring of assessment instruments for the academic and English language statewide assessments.

If you are interested (or know someone who may be interested) in a new and challenging opportunity, consult the position descriptions and application instructions on the State of Minnesota Careers website. Visit the State of Minnesota Careers website for more information and to apply.

Upcoming Opportunities

November Q&A Sessions

As communicated in the Oct. 25 *Assessment Update*, MDE will host the following three Q&A Sessions in November:

- November Q&A Session (1): National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) on Nov. 2, 2–3 p.m.
- November Q&A Session (2): Preparing to Train Staff on Nov. 14, 2–3 p.m.
- November Q&A Session (3): Pretest Editing on Nov. 28, 2–3 p.m.

Please refer to the Oct. 25 *Assessment Update* for more details including prerequisites, registration links, and links to submit questions prior to the session.

Tech Update

Supported System Requirements Updates

Updated supported system requirements for ACCESS for ELLs Online and WIDA Screener Online were posted to WIDA AMS under My Applications > General Information > Documents on Oct. 26. These system requirements will be valid for November 2023–February 2024.

Please note the following operating systems are no longer supported and have been removed from the table on page 4:

- Windows 8.1
- Windows Server 2012 R2
- iPadOS 14.x
- macOS 10.15
- Ubuntu 18.04 LTS version with Gnome Shell (Linux)
- macOS 11.x (Big Sur) is supported until Nov. 30.

DRC is currently evaluating support for Windows 11 SE and has removed it from the list of supported operating systems table on page 4. This operating system was previously listed under Phase 1: Best Effort Support.

Contact DRC Customer Support at wida@datarecognitioncorp.com or 855-787-9615 (TTY: 763-268-2889) with any questions.

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Minnesota Department of Education

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