

AN UPDATE FROM ACADEMIC STANDARDS, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT — DEC. 6, 2023

QUICK LINKS	IMPORTANT DATES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACCESS Materials Ordering Closes Dec. 15 • Alternate Assessment Coffee Break Series • MTAS Participation Documentation • Learning Management System • Upcoming Opportunities 	<p>Nov. 27–Dec. 15: Indicate the number of ACCESS Online testers for grades 1–12 and order test materials during Materials Ordering in the WIDA Assessment Management System (WIDA AMS)</p>

ACCESS Materials Ordering Closes Dec. 15

It is very important that districts complete materials ordering in WIDA AMS by Dec. 15. Districts must indicate the following by school:

- The number of Kindergarten ACCESS testers.
- The number of WIDA Alternate ACCESS testers by grade cluster.
- The number of large print and braille test booklets by grade cluster and tier or format.
- The number of ACCESS Paper testers by grade cluster and tier. Note: ACCESS Paper can be ordered either as accommodations for students with IEPs or 504 plans or for students enrolled in U.S. schools for less than a year. Refer to *Test Administration Considerations for ACCESS* in Chapter 8 of the [Procedures Manual](#) for additional information.
- The number of ACCESS Online testers for each grade cluster.
 - Even though the majority of ACCESS tests are administered online, paper test materials are needed for the grade-level clusters 1, 2–3 and 4–5 Writing tests. Paper test materials will be sent automatically for the indicated number of ACCESS Online testers in these grade-level clusters.
 - Note: While a keyboarding option exists for the grade cluster 4–5 Writing test, the default response mode in Minnesota for the grade cluster 4–5 Writing test is handwriting.

More information on Materials Ordering for the ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS can be found in Chapter 7 of the *Procedures Manual*. Detailed instructions on using WIDA AMS are available in the *WIDA AMS User Guide*. The *WIDA AMS User Guide* can be accessed from the link within the Get Help section of the [WIDA AMS landing page](#) or by logging into WIDA AMS and selecting My Applications > General Information > Documents.

Additionally, both the *Online ACCESS for ELLs: Administration* and the *Paper ACCESS for ELLs: Administration*

assessment training courses include modules on planning and logistics that cover materials ordering. The WIDA assessment trainings can be accessed through the [WIDA Secure Portal](#) (login required).

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Alternate Assessment Coffee Break Series

Meet with Alternate Assessment Specialists to Give Feedback and Ask Questions

The Academic Standards, Instruction, and Assessment Division will host a series of virtual coffee break sessions for MTAS test administrators and special education staff to ask any questions around alternate assessment, share their feedback, and connect with other special education staff from across the state. Please share this opportunity with staff in your district.

Join us for the next coffee break in the 2023–24 Alternate Assessment Coffee Break Series on Dec. 12 from 4–5 p.m. via Zoom. Please [register for the coffee break](#). This month we will be discussing the MTAS Supports and Accommodations for statewide assessments and highlighting new tools for IEP teams to reference in making these decisions. The topic for our Coffee Break on Jan. 9 will be MTAS 2024 Administration highlights. Bring your favorite beverage, along with your questions and any feedback you have, to share at this informal time focused around alternate assessment.

We will be meeting the second Tuesday of each month during the school year. You only need to register once to join any of the monthly coffee breaks that work for you. The remaining Coffee Break dates for this year are: Dec. 12, Jan. 9, Feb. 13, March 12, April 9, and May 14 at 4 p.m. For more information, contact Alt.Assessment.MDE@state.mn.us.

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MTAS Participation Documentation

Districts and charter schools should have received an email on Nov. 20 regarding the Assurance, Rationale, and Context (ARC) process. The ARC response must be completed and submitted to MDE by Dec. 22 via an online survey. To complete this task, districts and schools should use the Alternate Assessment (MTAS) Participation District Report, which is available in [Secure Reports](#) under Assessment Secure Reports, and the *Alternate Assessment Participation and Assurance, Rationale and Context (ARC) User Guide*, which is available on the [MTAS Participation page](#).

The ARC survey is broken into five sections in which the district will provide information about data, assurances, and where appropriate, narratives regarding alternate assessment participation rates. The questions in the survey can be found in the *Assurance, Rationale, and Context (ARC) Response Survey Questions* section of the *ARC User Guide* to guide district staff conversations in the ARC process. Special Education Directors, District Assessment Coordinators, Special Education case managers, and other key district staff should be included in conversations about alternate assessment participation, as reflected by the district's report, in order to

complete the ARC response. Once the district has prepared to answer the questions, complete the [online ARC survey](#) by Dec. 22.

For more information about the federal requirements and the work Minnesota has done pertaining to alternate assessment participation, refer to the [MTAS Participation page](#).

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Learning Management System

Login

Pearson is seeing two common issues as more staff are beginning to access the LMS, as described below.

Refer to the [LMS FAQs](#) on the [Training](#) page of PearsonAccess Next for information on registering and logging into the LMS. The LMS registration “how to” videos on the Training page have been updated; refer staff to these videos for detailed information on registering and logging in to the LMS.

Select District and School

There are two ways for district and school staff to set up their LMS accounts, depending on whether staff have a PearsonAccess Next account.

Learners *without* a PearsonAccess Next account will need to self-register their own LMS account. On the [Training](#) page, they will select the second button: Learning Management System (LMS) Self-Registration. These users will need to **correctly select both their district and school** when creating their account. Tip: Use Ctrl+F/Command+F to search for the district/school name or district/school number. Multiple districts and schools can be selected, as needed.

It is important for Learners to select the correct district and school when registering an LMS account. Once selected, the Learner cannot view or change their district and school selections without contacting the Pearson Help Desk.

Learners *with* a PearsonAccess Next account are automatically uploaded into the LMS and registered to the district and school assigned to them in PearsonAccess Next.

Use District Email

Regardless of how Learners first access the LMS, an Adobe account must also be established. It is important that staff use their district email when setting up the account. If the Learner *has* an Adobe account associated with their district email, they can sign into Adobe using their email and password. If the Learner *does not have* an Adobe account associated with their district email, they will need to create an Adobe account.

Available Learning Paths

The Learning Management System (LMS) organizes training modules into courses, learning paths, and catalogs.

- Courses are individual trainings in the LMS. Some courses are posted as standalone courses while others are part of learning paths.
- Learning paths are a group of required and optional courses that a Learner must complete prior to test administration. *Note: Learning paths are only available once all the required courses have been posted to the LMS.*
- Learning paths are grouped by categories tied to specific roles for test administration (for example, MCA Test Monitor, New MTAS Test Administrator – 1–2 years, ACCESS Test Administrator – Grade 1–12, etc.).
- Categories are organized into a course catalog. The Test Administration catalog contains learning paths with required and optional courses that must be completed prior to test administration. The DAC catalog includes optional training courses and training webinars for District Assessment Coordinators. The Assessment Literacy catalog includes trainings about the life cycle of an assessment and are available for any interested learners.

Pearson and MDE review and update all trainings each year prior to test administration. Once these trainings have been updated and posted to the LMS, Learners can enroll in the Learning Path and complete the required and optional trainings, as needed. Below is a timeline for when Learning Paths will be available in the LMS:

Learning Path	Date Available
ACCESS Test Administrator – Grades 1–12	Nov. 16
ACCESS Test Administrator – Kindergarten/WIDA Alternate ACCESS	Nov. 16
Test Security	Nov. 16
Technology Coordinators	Nov. 16
District Assessment Coordinators	Dec. 15
MCA Test Monitor	Jan. 5
New MTAS Test Administrator: 1–2 years	Jan. 11
Experienced MTAS Test Administrator: 3 or more years	Jan. 11

For a complete list of all the required and optional courses, and the posting date for each learning path, a new resource has been posted to the LMS Resources section on the PearsonAccess Next [Training](#) page.

Once the learning paths have been posted to the LMS, Learners can enroll in the appropriate learning path(s) within the Test Administration catalog to complete the required and optional courses that must be completed prior to test administration. To find a learning path, use the search feature along the top of the page or select the applicable checkboxes on the left side of the screen (for example, Test Administration). To enroll in a learning path, hover your cursor over the applicable learning path and select the blue plus symbol. Learners may also select the learning path tile and then select the blue Enroll button. To complete a learning path, the Learner must complete all required courses. Learners can also complete the optional trainings within the learning path as needed or instructed by their district.

Learners will need an LMS account before enrolling and completing learning paths or individual courses in the LMS. Resources for logging in and using the LMS are available on the Training page and within the LMS in the Training catalog. 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

DAC Test Administration Training: Registration

Next week, MDE will provide the Test Administration Training for all DACs. This training will focus on new and clarified information from the [Procedures Manual](#) for the 2023–24 school year.

MDE is offering two virtual training sessions, and DACs only need to attend one session. MDE will also post a pre-recorded training to the DAC Catalog of the [Learning Management System](#) (LMS) on Dec. 15 for DACs who are unable to attend either of the virtual training sessions. MDE recommends that DACs attend a virtual session, if possible, as they will include opportunities to collaborate with other DACs from across the state.

- [Register for Virtual Session 1](#): Dec. 12 (9 a.m.–noon)
- [Register for Virtual Session 2](#): Dec. 13 (1–4 p.m.)

The Test Administration Training is required for all DACs in order to prepare for spring testing; all DACs must complete this training. Participation will be automatically indicated in the LMS following the virtual training events. For those who view the recording, their participation will appear in the LMS upon completion. Please note that participants must complete 80% of the training to get credit.

MDE aims to deliver our presentations in a way that will be accessible for our participants. If you anticipate needing accommodations, contact mde.testing@state.mn.us. 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.

New DAC Pearson Basics Training (1–2 years)

Pearson will provide an overview of its systems for new District Assessment Coordinators (DACs) in their first or second year. The live virtual training will focus on user management and preliminary reports in PearsonAccess Next. A recording of the training will be posted to the [Learning Management System \(LMS\)](#) on Dec. 15 (under the DAC catalog > Pearson Trainings and Webinars tag).

To prepare for the training, the *User Management in PearsonAccess Next* short video training is posted to the [Learning Management System \(LMS\)](#) for review (under the DAC catalog > Pearson Trainings and Webinar tag).

The table below contains the webinar training topic, high-level agenda, date and time, and the meeting link. No registration is required. Select the hyperlink to join the meeting.

Training and Topic	Date and Time	Meeting Link
New DAC Pearson Basics Training (1–2 years) Overview of Pearson’s systems, including user management and preliminary reports in PearsonAccess Next.	Thursday, Dec. 7 2–3:30 p.m.	Join the webinar on Dec. 7.

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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.

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