AN UPDATE FROM ACADEMIC STANDARDS, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT — MARCH 6, 2024

QUICK LINKS	IMPORTANT DATES
• Verifying Student Information for MCA/MTAS • Students Moving Into or Out of the District during Testing • Indicating EL for ACCESS/WIDA Alternate ACCESS • March WIDA and DRC Webinar • Volunteers Requested: Participate in an ACCESS Paper Test Enhancement Pilot (repeat) • Professional Learning Opportunities for Educators	**March 4–May 3 (May 10 Science MCA only):** *MCA/MTAS testing window* **March 15:** *Last day to order additional paper test materials in WIDA AMS for ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS* **March 22:** *End of ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS testing window* **March 22:** *Last day to complete administration tasks in WIDA AMS for ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS* **March 29:** *Deadline to ship paper ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS test materials to DRC*

Verifying Student Information for MCA/MTAS

Test Eligibility for MCA/MTAS

Students must be registered for the correct tests in PearsonAccess Next before they can be added to test sessions or assigned for MTAS data entry. Information for all students enrolled in a district or school is sent nightly to Pearson in precode files throughout the testing windows.

If a student's test eligibility does not appear in PearsonAccess Next, first verify the student's information in Test WES under Precode Student Eligibility. Enter the student's MARSS/SSID number to check on the following possibilities:

- If blank demographic fields appear when you enter the MARSS/SSID number, either there is an issue with the student enrollment record submitted to MDE, or the student has not been submitted to MDE. Work with your MARSS Coordinator to correct any issues and resubmit student enrollment data.

- The student record is being sent in precode for another district or school. The first column appearing in the Precode Eligibility table (at the bottom of the screen) is the district/school where the student record is being sent in precode. If the student is dual-enrolled, verify which district or school will be testing the student and manually change where the student will be testing, as needed, by selecting "Add" on the student's information.

- The student record has not been sent in precode to Pearson. If a student was recently submitted in enrollment information to MDE, or if a change in Precode Student Eligibility was made recently, the record may not have been sent to Pearson yet. When changes are made through a student enrollment update, the student information and test eligibility is typically available in PearsonAccess Next two business days after the data is submitted.

More information is included in the *Test WES Precode User Guide*.

Universal Supports and Accommodations for MCA

Districts can continue to make changes to universal supports and accommodations for MCA in Test WES throughout the testing window. If paper test materials are needed (such as, scripts, paper tests, or braille tests), they must be ordered in PearsonAccess Next. Refer to the *Ordering Additional Test Materials* resource posted on the PearsonAccess Next website for more information.

Districts must ensure that universal support/accommodation codes affecting the tests students take online are indicated at least one business day prior to the student testing, including word-to-word pop-up translation codes for Mathematics and Science MCA (HM, SO, SP). Students can only be added to a session if they are eligible for the test assigned:

- Only students with the script for Science MCA accommodation code (MS) will be eligible for Science Script test sessions.

- Only students with an accommodation code requiring data entry (for example, 18 or HC) will be eligible for Data Entry test sessions. Note: A common irregularity last spring was that these codes were not indicated ahead of time and staff were attempting to enter student responses in the incorrect form that did not match the test materials. This requires the DAC to contact Pearson to reset the student's test.

- All other students, including those students requiring accommodated text-to-speech or word-to-word pop-up translations, will be eligible for a regular test session (for example, Grade 07 Mathematics MCA).

Full details, including how to verify that the applicable codes appear in PearsonAccess Next, are included in the *MCA Online Testing User Guide* posted on the PearsonAccess Next website.

Students Moving Into or Out of the District during Testing

Districts should attempt to test all students who are enrolled during the testing windows. If a student moves during a testing window and has not tested in their former district, the new district should test the student.

A student who moves from one district to another near the end of the testing window and has not yet taken the test should be tested if possible.

If a student moves from another state and was administered the other state's standards-based and/or English language proficiency accountability assessments, the student must be tested again in Minnesota if they are enrolled on the first day of the applicable testing window.

Refer to pages 230–231 of the *Procedures Manual* for additional information about students moving during the testing window.

Newly Identified English Learners

There are no exemptions from statewide assessments for English learners who are new to Minnesota or to the country. Any student who is identified as an English learner, as determined by the district, is required to participate in ACCESS/WIDA Alternate ACCESS. A paper administration of the ACCESS is available for English learners who have been enrolled in U.S. schools for less than a year. Refer to pages 204–205 of the *Procedures Manual* for additional information about paper administration considerations.

New students, including students who have been identified as English learners, are also required to participate in the MCA/MTAS if applicable for the student's grade level. Thorough consideration of the available universal supports is encouraged for students who are new-to-country. Suggested supports for multilingual learners are found in Chapter 4 of the *Procedures Manual*.

Indicating EL for ACCESS/WIDA Alternate ACCESS

Only students who are indicated as English learners in enrollment data submitted to MDE are eligible to take the ACCESS or WIDA Alternate ACCESS. While districts will have the opportunity to review ineligible enrollment records during Posttest Editing, regular communication with your EL staff and MARSS Coordinator throughout the testing window can help ensure that your English learners' enrollment records reported to MDE are accurate at all times. Students who take the assessment with enrollment records indicating they are not English learners will have their tests automatically invalidated at the close of the Posttest Editing window. These invalidations cannot be changed.

March WIDA and DRC Webinar

WIDA and DRC will be hosting the following webinar in March:

- Post Testing: Interpreting Score Reports, March 12, 1–2 p.m.

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

Volunteers Requested: Participate in an ACCESS Paper Test Enhancement Pilot (repeat)

WIDA is exploring an alternative to the CDs used to administer the ACCESS Paper. In this proposed alternative, Test Administrators would stream audio on a computer using a WIDA AMS account. To pilot the streaming audio experience, WIDA is seeking Test Administrators, test coordinators, and technology coordinators at schools or districts that currently administer the ACCESS Paper to one or more students.

Participants in the pilot will log in to WIDA AMS and play a selection of audio files while following an ACCESS Paper *Test Administrator's Script*. After completing the activity, participants will provide feedback through a survey, which should take approximately 15 minutes. Note: Students will not be involved in the pilot.

Participation in this pilot will help WIDA improve the ACCESS Paper test experience. The pilot will run from April 8 to June 7. If you would like more information or are interested in participating, please contact mde.testing@state.mn.us by March 15.

Professional Learning Opportunities for Educators

Please share the following opportunities with education leaders in your district.

Student Role in Assessment for Learning–Webinar Series

The MDE COMPASS team and WestEd will be hosting a two-part webinar series around the student role in assessment for learning that will engage participants in learning around this topic and introduce further opportunities provided by MDE. This webinar series is ideal for grades K–12 teachers, coaches, and leaders seeking professional learning opportunities around student-focused instruction and assessment for learning.

The webinar series will explore:

- The instructional routines that support learning partnerships with students.

- What teachers and students do to make learning visible and use in the moment evidence of learning to inform next steps in learning.

- The roles leaders, coaches, and teachers play that nurture student agency and build collaborative learning environments.

- The relationship among student role, agency, and equity.

- Introduce the Minnesota Student Agency in Learning (SAIL) course and Minnesota Data and Assessment Literacy (MnDAL) modules for deeper professional learning opportunities in the 2024–25 school year.

Please register for one session for part 1 and one session for part 2:

Part 1: [April 2, 10–11 a.m.](#) or [April 3, 11 a.m.–12 p.m.](#)

Part 2: [April 9, 10–11 a.m.](#) or [April 11, 11 a.m.–12 p.m.](#)

Formative Assessment and Student Agency Learning Network Series

The MDE COMPASS team is hosting a small prototype of a learning network to explore formative assessment and student agency. The learning sessions are ideal for school and district leaders and instructional coaches who are interested in deepening their formative assessment knowledge, and ways in which to cultivate learning environments that support assessment for learning and promote student agency.

The prototype learning sessions are an effort to build capacity and knowledge to strengthen Minnesota's statewide implementation support for formative assessment and student-centered instruction. In addition, these sessions will provide sustainable network opportunities for participants to share learning and instructional leadership practices that support strong, formative assessment implementation.

The three-session learning series will explore:

- The culture of learning that supports student agency and metacognition.

- The essential leadership roles and conditions that support collaborative learning environments and foster learner agency.

- Addressing early-stage challenges and misconceptions in formative assessment and student-centered learning.

- Available Minnesota learning pathways for educators and leaders for extended or deepening professional learning in the 2024–25 school year.

Session 1: March 20, 11 a.m.–noon

Session 2: April 10, 1–2 p.m.

Session 3: May 8, 1–2 p.m.

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Minnesota Department of Education

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

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