AN UPDATE FROM ACADEMIC STANDARDS, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT — APRIL 3, 2024

QUICK LINKS	IMPORTANT DATES
- MCA/MTAS Reminders 2024–25 Parent/Guardian Participation Guide and Refusal Information - Graduation Requirements Records Resources and Updates - Common Misadministration: Script Accommodation for Science MCA - Opportunities for MTAS Test Administrators and Special Education Staff	**March 4–May 3 (May 10 Science MCA only):** *MCA/MTAS testing window* **April 30 (noon):** *Deadline to order additional MTAS (all subjects), and Mathematics and Reading MCA paper test materials in PearsonAccess Next* **May 7 (noon):** *Deadline to order additional Science MCA paper test materials in PearsonAccess Next*

MCA/MTAS Reminders

Data Entry for MCA and MTAS

Data entry is the process used by district staff to enter student responses from MCA paper test books in TestNav and from MTAS Data Collection Forms in PearsonAccess Next. Pearson does not score paper test materials for MCA and MTAS. Therefore, in order for those tests to be scored, it is the district's responsibility to enter this data online for scoring. MDE recommends completing data entry as early in the testing windows as possible once testing is complete.

MCA data entry is done in TestNav during the testing window. For test security purposes, TestNav can only be accessed for entry of student responses during the hours of 6 a.m.–7 p.m. on weekdays throughout the testing window. Refer to the *MCA Data Entry User Guide*, available on the User Guides page of the PearsonAccess Next website, for more information.

MTAS data entry is done in PearsonAccess Next during the testing window. MTAS data entry is not restricted to the 6 a.m.–7 p.m. window referenced above. Refer to the *MTAS Data Entry User Guide* available on the User Guides page of the PearsonAccess Next website for more information.

In order for students to be loaded correctly for data entry, ensure you allow enough time for any updates to be made and reflected in PearsonAccess Next.

- Any enrollment data updates must be submitted to MDE at least two business days in advance. Once enrollment data is submitted to MDE, this data is available the next business day in Test WES for districts to make edits (for example, updating test assignments to indicate MTAS or indicating accommodation codes that require data entry) before it is sent to Pearson. The updated student record will appear the following business day in PearsonAccess Next.

- If enrollment updates are not required but other updates are needed (for example, updating test assignments to indicate MTAS or indicating accommodation codes that require data entry), allow one business day after indication for the updated student record to appear in PearsonAccess Next.

Note: A common irregularity last spring was that accommodation codes requiring data entry for MCA 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.

Students Moving Into or Out of the District during Testing

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

If a student moves to a new district and has not started the MCA or MTAS, the student's test eligibility will automatically move to the new district when updated enrollment data is submitted to MDE and sent to Pearson through the precode files. No additional action is needed. However, if a student moves to a new district and the test has already been started or completed, the student's test will not automatically move. Districts can use the Student Test Not Associated with the Student Organization operational report in PearsonAccess Next to display student tests that have been started or completed at a different district or school, and to verify if DACs need to contact Pearson to move a started test. Completed tests stay at the district where the student originally tested; results do not move with the student to the new district.

Refer to the *MCA Online Testing User Guide*, available on the User Guides page of the PearsonAccess Next website, for detailed instructions on accessing this operational report. Additional information about students moving during the testing window is found on pages 230–231 of the *Procedures Manual*.

2024–25 Parent/Guardian Participation Guide and Refusal Information

An updated *Parent/Guardian Participation Guide and Refusal Information* form for statewide assessments is now posted on the Student Participation page of the MDE website. Translated versions of this form will be coming soon, and information will be provided in an upcoming *Assessment Update*.

This version of the form will be used for the 2024–25 school year and must be included in the 2024–25 student handbook. Only minor updates were made, mainly to update test names for new assessments that will begin to be administered (WIDA Alternate ACCESS and Alternate MCA). If parents/guardians submit the updated form for this year's test administrations, districts may accept it as documentation as the overall content of the form is the same. Note: The 2023–24 version of the form was removed but will be re-posted on the MDE website until the testing windows close; the translated versions of the 2023–24 version of the form remain posted.

Graduation Requirements Records Resources and Updates

The updated *Graduation Requirements Records (GRR) User Guide* is now posted on the [Graduation Requirements Records (GRR)](#) page of the MDE website. GRR is a secure Minnesota Department of Education system used to request reimbursement for administrating college entrance exams to eligible students. Public school districts can request reimbursement for both ACT (ACT and ACT plus Writing) and SAT for students eligible for a free or reduced-price meal and students unable to pay. MDE recommends that districts refer to the user guide while submitting requests. The following are important reminders and updates:

- Beginning this year, districts can upload Excel files directly into GRR.

- If you have only a small number of students for whom to submit reimbursement requests, MDE recommends entering requests manually.

- If you will be uploading the requests, ensure that you download a new version of the template each year. To avoid errors when uploading, do not use a file uploaded in a previous year. Refer to the user guide for the specific instructions for file uploads.

- Once reimbursement requests have been submitted, it is important to review the reimbursement reports in GRR. These reports are now available in GRR. Because of the different cost structures for ACT based on administration mode, please verify the Claimed Student Detail Report and Estimated Student Amount Reports are correct based on the mode selected by your district.

A recorded GRR training will be posted to the [Learning Management System (LMS)](#) on April 12. MDE will also host a GRR Q&A webinar on April 23. More information and the link to register for the Q&A will be included in an upcoming *Assessment Update*.

Common Misadministration: Script Accommodation for Science MCA

The script accommodation (MS code) is available for Mathematics and Science MCAs. For the Mathematics MCA, the script accommodation requires students to use a paper test. Indicating the MS code for math will

automatically ensure the student is eligible for a Data Entry test session. A paper test booklet will need to be placed as an additional order.

For Science MCA, however, the script accommodation is available for students taking either the paper test or the online test. Indicating the MS code for science will automatically make the student eligible for an online test if no paper accommodations are indicated. If a student requires a paper test book accommodation, the applicable code must be entered separately in Test WES to ensure the student is eligible for a Data Entry test session. If placing an additional order for test materials for a student who needs both, a science script and the paper test book will need to be indicated in PearsonAccess Next.

Additionally, the science script used by the Test Monitor includes the script for both the paper administration and the online administration. Test Monitors need to be aware of the different sections of the script and read the appropriate script for the type of administration. Common misadministrations for the science script accommodation include not ordering paper test materials when necessary, and Test Monitors reading the wrong section from the script book for the type of administration the student is taking.

Opportunities for MTAS Test Administrators and Special Education Staff

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

Coffee Break Series

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 your feedback, and connect with other special education staff from across the state. Bring your questions and any feedback you have to share at this informal time focused around alternate assessment.

Join us via Zoom for the next coffee break on April 9 from 4–5 p.m. Please register for the coffee break. This month we will be discussing common MTAS administration questions and have a discussion around the new stopping rule for the Alternate MCA. 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 April 9 and May 14 at 4 p.m. For more information, contact Alt.Assessment.MDE@state.mn.us.

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Minnesota Department of Education

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