Assessment Update

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

QUICK LINKS	IMPORTANT DATES
- Benchmark Reports Coming Soon - Enter Reimbursement Requests in GRR by Sept. 8 - Parent Fact Sheets - Educator Edition Celebrates First Anniversary - Upcoming Opportunities	**Sept. 6:** *View Benchmark Reports in PearsonAccess Next* **Sept. 8:** *Last day to request reimbursement for college entrance exams (ACT or SAT)*

Benchmark Reports Coming Soon

The 2022–23 MCA Benchmark Reports will be available on Sept. 6 in PearsonAccess Next under Reports > Published Reports for DAC and Assessment Administrator (AA) user roles [login required].

Benchmark reports are generated at a school or district level for each grade and subject. They may be helpful as an additional resource for understanding school or district MCA performance on each benchmark assessed from the grade-level standards. The reports also provide summarized information about student performance on each strand or substrand from the standards. Educators should always consider additional information about student learning and instruction when reviewing benchmark reports. Educators may find the report helpful as one piece of information when making decisions that are larger in scope, such as curriculum alignment or scope and sequence planning. Before digging in and making inferences from the benchmark reports, review the following resources:

- The 2022–23 *Benchmark Report Interpretive Guide* and 2022–23 *Benchmark Report "How To" Quick Guides* for Reading, Mathematics and Science are posted on the Additional Reporting Resources page of the PearsonAccess Next website.

- The 2022–23 *Benchmark Report Video* is also posted on the Additional Reporting Resources page of the PearsonAccess Next website.

- The Minnesota Questions Tool posted on the Released MCA Questions page of the Testing 1, 2, 3 website contains released test questions (items) from past MCAs, as well as links to data about each

item. Educators can use these items to better understand how the MCA is aligned to the Minnesota K–12 Academic Standards, and how the items are written to reflect the rigor and complexity of the standards.

- MDE staff developed and posted Benchmark Achievement Level Descriptors for reading and mathematics on the [Success Criteria](#) page of Testing 1, 2, 3 website (under the Achievement Level Descriptors expandable header). The Benchmark ALDs can help make meaning out of the benchmark reports as they describe the knowledge and skills students typically demonstrate across the four achievement levels for each benchmark from the standards.

Note: Take your district's standards implementation plan into consideration when communicating about and using benchmark data. For science, the Benchmark Reports will show the specific 2009 benchmarks on the Science MCA-III, which may not align with certain grade-level instruction depending on the transition plan.

For the technical details of the benchmark report calculations, refer to Appendix A: Benchmark Report Calculations Resource of the *Technical Manual for Minnesota's Statewide Assessments* posted on the [Technical Reports](#) page of the MDE website (under the Technical Manual expandable header).

For questions about the benchmark reports, please contact mde.testing@state.mn.us. If DACs or AAs have questions about accessing the benchmark reports, contact Pearson at 888-817-8659 or [submit a Pearson help desk request](#).

Note*:* There were no benchmark reports produced for 2020 due to COVID-19. In 2019, the MCA Benchmark Report was redesigned using a different calculation method to report school and district performance on benchmarks. School and district staff should not compare benchmark reports before 2019 to benchmark reports from 2019, 2021–23.

Enter Reimbursement Requests in GRR by Sept. 8

Districts that have received assessment results for the college entrance exam they administered (ACT or SAT) should enter reimbursement requests for eligible students in the [Graduation Requirements Records (GRR)](#) system no later than Sept. 8.

Districts will be reimbursed for grade 11 or 12 students who have been identified in their enrollment data as FRP (free/reduced-priced meal) and have not previously received a college entrance exam reimbursement, as students are only eligible once for this reimbursement. Districts may also be reimbursed (on a prorated basis if necessary) for students who are unable to pay for the exam. Districts must determine the criteria for unable to pay and enter those requests in GRR.

Common Issues

Any student identity error must first be resolved in student enrollment data and/or the Student ID Validation system before the record can be added into GRR. Student data entered in GRR must match student enrollment data. If you receive the "Student match based on matching rules, but ID is different" message, check the following:

- A student goes by a different name than what is reported in student enrollment data to MDE (the name in the enrollment data must be entered in GRR).

- A nickname has been entered instead of the full name (for example, "Ben" instead of "Benjamin").

- The student's last name is incomplete or not entered correctly (for example, "Carlson" or "Carlson-Hernandez" instead of "Carlson Hernandez").

Reimbursement Reports

After districts enter reimbursement requests in GRR, they must confirm that the students for which they expect reimbursement are included in the reimbursement reports; these reports are refreshed each morning. It is important to confirm student information is entered correctly by Sept. 8 to avoid incorrect reimbursements made to the district. The *Claimed Student Detail Report* identifies what records will be reimbursed (or the reason records will not be reimbursed). The *Estimated Student Amount Report* gives an estimate of the amount to be received.

Resources

More information is in the *Graduation Requirements Records (GRR) User Guide* and in the *MDE Graduation Requirements Records (GRR) Training*, which is posted in the Training Management System (TMS) on the District Assessment Coordinator tab under the MDE Recorded Webinars category.

Parent Fact Sheets

The *Parent Fact Sheets* for MCA, MTAS, ACCESS, and Alternate ACCESS are available on the Students and Families Statewide Testing page of the MDE website. English versions of the *MCA* and *MTAS Parent Fact Sheets* are posted on Minnesota's Academic Standards-Based Assessments page, and the *ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS Parent Fact Sheets* are available on the Minnesota's Assessments for English Learners page.

Translated versions of the *Parent Fact Sheets* are available on the Translated Document page. MDE translates these documents into the following languages: Amharic, Arabic, Chinese (Mandarin), Hmong, Karen, Oromo, Russian, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

Educator Edition Celebrates First Anniversary

In September 2022, the Division of Academic Standards, Instruction, and Assessment launched a brand-new monthly newsletter: the *Educator Edition*. The combined successor to both the *Testing 1, 2, 3* and the *Curriculum Directors* newsletters, the *Educator Edition* is now in its second year of publication. The newsletter provides educators, curriculum directors, and other staff with links to the implementation of academic standards, data and information about instruction, and assessment resources; ultimately, the *Educator Edition* is a resource for districts to help create a more equitable learning environment. Each month the newsletter features Updates From MDE, Upcoming Opportunities, and Important Ideas and Research.

The next edition of the *Educator Edition* is set to be distributed on Tuesday, Sept. 5. Please forward the newsletter to others in your district, charter, or school who might be interested in the topics and encourage them to subscribe to *Educator Edition*.

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Upcoming Opportunities

WIDA and DRC Q&A Webinars

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

- *Welcome Back: What's New in 2023?* on Tuesday, Sept. 12 from 1–2:30 p.m.
- *Pre-Testing: ACCESS for ELLs for New Test Administrators* on Thursday, Sept. 14 from 1–2 p.m.
- *Pre-Testing: ACCESS for ELLs for New Test Coordinators* on Tuesday, Sept. 19 from 1–2 p.m.
- *Pre-Testing: Ordering Materials in WIDA AMS* on Tuesday, Sept. 26 from 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.

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