

AN UPDATE FROM ACADEMIC STANDARDS, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT—OCT. 5, 2022

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New DAC Orientation

The in-person session of the New DAC Orientation will be held **tomorrow, Thursday Oct. 6, from 9–3:30 p.m.** in Minneapolis. The virtual sessions will be held next week on Oct. 11–13, from 9–11 a.m. each day. Use the table below for registration links.

Refer to the Sept. 21 *Assessment Update* posted on the [Assessment Update](#) page of the PearsonAccess Next website for detailed information on the New DAC Orientation.

| FORMAT | DATE AND TIME | REGISTRATION LINK |
|-----------|---|--|
| In Person | <p>Thursday, Oct. 6, 2022 9–3:30 p.m.</p> <p>Delta Hotels by Marriot Minneapolis Northeast Minneapolis Ballroom 1330 Industrial Boulevard Northeast Minneapolis, MN 55413</p> | <p>Register for In-Person Training</p> |

| FORMAT | DATE AND TIME | REGISTRATION LINK |
|---|---|--|
| Virtual (Plan on attending all three sessions) | Session 1: Tuesday, Oct. 11, 2022 9–11 a.m. Session 2: Wednesday, Oct. 12, 2022 9–11 a.m. Session 3: Thursday, Oct. 13, 2022 9–11 a.m. | Register for Virtual Trainings Note: The same link is used for all three session for convenience. You only need to register once. |

Note: Recorded sessions will be posted on the Training Management System (TMS) by Friday, Oct. 14 for DACs who are unable to attend either the in-person or the virtual orientation.

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District Testing Calendar Reminder

Districts are required to post a comprehensive testing calendar on the district website before the first day of the school year; this information may also be posted on school-level websites if the district chooses. Districts may choose how to display the information (for example, in a chart or a calendar format), but it should be presented in a way that is easily accessible. Core requirements for the district testing calendar have not changed and are detailed in the [Procedures Manual](#), starting on page 124.

If a district has not yet established specific dates when students will be testing, MDE recommends using previous years' timeframes as a starting place and then updating them as testing schedules are known. Districts should keep their testing calendar up-to-date throughout the school year.

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Statewide Testing Participation for Students with IEPs or 504 Plans

Please share with your IEP, 504 plan, and EL teams as they plan for the participation of students with disabilities in statewide assessments.

The current reauthorization of both the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that students with disabilities participate in the statewide assessments that are designed to hold schools accountable for the academic performance of all students. IEP teams or 504 plan teams determine the appropriate manner for students with disabilities to participate in statewide assessments.

Students with disabilities may participate in statewide assessments in these ways:

With or without accommodations. IEP and 504 plan teams determine which accommodations, if any, and general supports are appropriate for students with disabilities. Accommodations should be documented in the IEP or 504 plan and must be provided based on individual need, as long as they do not invalidate the assessment. General supports are features or practices available for all students that may replace the need for an accommodation, depending on the student's disability; general supports may also be provided along with linguistic supports and accommodations.

- **English language proficiency accountability assessments:** IEP and 504 plan teams use the [Accessibility and Accommodations Manual](#) when considering the needs of each student for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS. In addition, information about general supports and accommodations specific to Minnesota are included in Chapter 4 of the [Procedures Manual](#).
- **Standards-based accountability assessments:** IEP and 504 plan teams use the general supports and accommodation information in Chapter 4 of the *Procedures Manual* when considering the needs of each student for MCA and MTAS.

By taking an alternate assessment for which they are eligible. Only students with IEPs are eligible for alternate assessments. The IEP team documents the decision to administer an alternate assessment in the student's IEP.

- **English language proficiency accountability assessments:** For English learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities, the IEP team, in conjunction with EL staff, determines if the Alternate ACCESS is the most appropriate English language proficiency accountability assessment in place of the ACCESS, using the [Alternate ACCESS for ELLs Participation Decision Tree](#).
- **Standards-based accountability assessments:** For students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who meet the eligibility requirements, the IEP team may determine that MTAS is the most appropriate measure of academic skills in one or more subject areas in place of the MCA. Access the [Eligibility Requirements for the Minnesota Test of Academic Skills \(MTAS\)](#).

Please make sure that relevant EL and Special Education staff are aware of the available resources and either know how to access them or are provided them for reference when making decisions about student participation and accommodations.

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Deadline for MCA and MTAS Late Score Entry or Rescore Requests

The deadline for late score entry or rescore requests for spring 2022 MCA and MTAS testing is Oct. 12.

The *Request for Late Score Entry Form* can be found on page 261 of the [Procedures Manual](#). These requests can be made if a district did not enter a student's MTAS scores or responses from an MCA paper test book in

PearsonAccess Next during the testing window. Contact Pearson at 888-817-8659 or [submit a Pearson help desk request online](#) with further questions. Note: For late score entry requests received at this time, students will not receive an Individual Student Report (ISR), but districts can request that Pearson provide an On-Demand Report for the student.

A rescore may be requested when a parent/guardian or school district staff disagrees with the final score a student received (typically for an MCA paper administration). Note: Items for online administrations are reviewed multiple times before and during testing for scoring accuracy and unanticipated responses. Because of MDE's rigorous item review process, a rescore is highly unlikely to result in a score change for an individual student. If a discrepancy is found for an online item during a scoring review, scores will be updated for all affected students. DACs must email mde.testing@state.mn.us with the student's MARSS number and the rationale for requesting a rescore, and MDE will review the request. If approved, the cost for rescoring a test is \$125 per test. A rescore does not include test or score code changes (INV, NC, REF-S, etc.).

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Deadline to Apply to be a MTAS Field Auditor

Please share with your staff. This Friday, Oct. 7, is the last day to apply for MTAS Field Auditor.

Each year, MDE employs Field Auditors to observe MTAS administrations in selected schools around the state and to gather evidence to evaluate the validity and reliability of the assessment. MTAS Field Auditors serve as evidence-gatherers; their job is to obtain evidence that will determine 1) the extent to which the training of the administration was properly implemented and 2) the consistency of the administration for students across the state. For 2022–23, MDE is looking for auditors to do between 8–10 days of work from February–May.

MTAS Field Auditors must be able to travel within an approximate 100-mile radius of their home area. This year, MDE is especially seeking auditors who can serve the regions of Sartell, Rochester, and the Twin Cities Metro.

Field auditors must have these minimum qualifications:

- Current or retired educator or administrator, with licensure in Minnesota
- Experience working with students with disabilities in an educational setting
- Three years of classroom experience

If you or one of your peers may be interested in learning more about this contract work, an application to become an MTAS Field Auditor as well as details on compensation, schedule and tasks can be requested by emailing: alt.assessment.mde@state.mn.us.

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Minnesota Department of Education

education.mn.gov > Districts, 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.