

AN UPDATE FROM STATEWIDE STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND DATA ANALYTICS—OCTOBER 14, 2020

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## ***Key Communications with Districts***

With the start of the new school year, please verify that the contact information in the [MDE-ORG system](#) is up to date and accurate. If your district has a new District Assessment Coordinator (DAC), please ensure MDE-ORG is updated as soon as possible so they can receive relevant information, including opportunities specifically designed for new DACs.

All contact information in MDE-ORG is updated and maintained by the district's Site Verification Coordinator (SVC), who is listed in MDE-ORG. The SVC maintains the district's contact information within the [District and School Site Verification system](#). Work with the SVC for any necessary changes or updates.

## ***Assessment Update Distribution***

MDE sends the weekly *Assessment Update* to all DACs and District Technology Coordinators (DTCs) indicated in MDE-ORG. If there is more than one DAC, they all will be included on the *Assessment Update* distribution list. Additional DACs may be designated as an Alternate DAC in MDE-ORG. Any additional staff interested in receiving the *Assessment Update* should email [mde.testing@state.mn.us](mailto:mde.testing@state.mn.us) to be added to the distribution list. Previous updates are posted to the [Assessment Update page](#) on PearsonAccess Next.

MDE includes key technology updates and articles in the *Assessment Update*, so it is important that DTC contact information is accurate. Technology coordinators should pay particular attention to the *Tech Update* section.

Note: The *Assessment Update* is no longer automatically sent to superintendents or directors but they can email [mde.testing@state.mn.us](mailto:mde.testing@state.mn.us) to be added to the distribution list.

## PearsonAccess Next Accounts

Pearson receives DAC and Alternate DAC contact information from MDE-ORG and uses this information to create DAC accounts in PearsonAccess Next within 1–2 business days of receiving this information.

If your DAC account was created or updated in MDE-ORG more than three days ago and you did not receive an automatically generated email from PearsonAccess Next System Message with instructions for logging in to your account, contact Pearson at 888-817-8659 or [submit a Pearson help desk request](#).

Note: While the Training Management System (TMS) is not directly linked to PearsonAccess Next, having a DAC user role provides access to the “Admin” option in the TMS, which includes the ability to view completed trainings and document group trainings for all users in the district or school. From January to March, PearsonAccess Next account information for DACs is added to the TMS every week. For the rest of year, DAC PearsonAccess Next account information is added to the TMS every two weeks.

## WIDA and WIDA AMS Accounts

In order to complete the required trainings for the ACCESS, Alternate ACCESS, and the WIDA Online Screener, DACs need to have a user account in the WIDA Secure Portal. Also, in order to complete administrative tasks for online testing or the online screener, DACs must have a user account in WIDA AMS. New DACs that need WIDA Secure Portal and WIDA AMS accounts should send their request to [mde.testing@state.mn.us](mailto:mde.testing@state.mn.us). As long as they are indicated as the DAC in MDE-ORG, MDE will approve the request and send it to the service providers to create both accounts.

Note: A new DAC should confirm they have already been indicated as the DAC in MDE-ORG before sending their request to [mde.testing@state.mn.us](mailto:mde.testing@state.mn.us).

On Friday, Oct. 16, MDE will send a site file to WIDA AMS with all the current information indicated in MDE-ORG. Within the next couple of weeks, District Testing Coordinators (DACs) and District Technology Coordinators will receive a notification email that WIDA AMS accounts have been updated for the current school year. Users will then be able to verify that the 2020–2021 Administration is available in the WIDA AMS Administration dropdown menu. Please contact DRC Customer Support at [WIDA@DataRecognitionCorp.com](mailto:WIDA@DataRecognitionCorp.com) or 855-787-9615 with any questions.

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## ***New DAC Orientation: Handouts and Resources***

The majority of handouts and resources for next week’s New DAC Orientation are now available on the [MDE & Pearson DAC Trainings site](#). (Note: This links to a new site, which is different from the site referenced in the Sept. 16 *Assessment Update*.) This page includes copies of the resources that will be used to participate in the orientation, a copy of the presentation (which will be available on Friday, Oct. 16), and tips for participating in the WebEx. There is also a section containing links to the prerequisite trainings recommended by MDE and links

to other resources that will be referenced throughout the orientation. New DACs can refer to this page throughout the orientation as needed.

For registration for the New DAC orientation, see [Upcoming Opportunities below](#).

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## ***WIDA Webinar: Test Scheduling***

WIDA will host the *Test Scheduling* webinar on Thursday, Oct. 22, from 1–2 p.m. [Join the Test Scheduling webinar on Oct. 22](#). The webinar is designed for DACs and Test Administrators and will address the following topics:

- Scheduling paper and online testing
- Grouping students
- Timing of tests
- Scheduling practice tests
- Scheduling a room

For a list of all of WIDA’s planned webinars, the *2020-21 ACCESS and Screener Webinar Calendar* document is available on the [ACCESS Webinars page](#), which includes registration links. WIDA also posts recordings of their webinars on the ACCESS Webinars page for those who are unable to attend the live webinars.

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## ***Educator Resources on PearsonAccess Next***

The following resources are available through Pearson for teachers and families to use in support of both in-person and virtual instruction.

### **Pearson Perspective**

[Perspective for Educators](#) and [Perspective for Families](#) provide thousands of learning resources aligned to the Minnesota Academic Standards for reading, mathematics, and science. Teachers can create assignments, build tests, and differentiate resources using Learning Locators. Enter the “mn\_edu” pass phrase in Perspective for Educators to get started. Resources are available within Perspective to help teachers and parents navigate the site.

For more information, select Pearson Perspective under Quick Links on [PearsonAccess Next](#), or contact Pearson at 888-817-8659 or [submit a Pearson help desk request](#).

## WriteToLearn

[WriteToLearn](#) (under Quick Links on [PearsonAccess Next](#)) is a complimentary online literacy tool available for Minnesota teachers and students in grades 8 and 10. WriteToLearn provides students the opportunity to practice their essay and summary writing skills and expand their vocabulary. As students participate in assigned activities, they receive personalized feedback, hints, and tips to encourage, instruct, and reward their progress, and teachers have the benefit of assigning more writing practice without the added grading. To get started, District Assessment Coordinators should email [MNWriteToLearn@Pearson.com](mailto:MNWriteToLearn@Pearson.com).

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## Odds and Ends

- **Day with DACs Recording:** The two morning activities during a Day with DACs webinar (i.e., Jennifer Dugan’s “State of the Statewide Assessments” and the panel conversation/Q&A) were recorded, and will be posted to the Training Management System (TMS) on Friday, Oct. 23.

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## Upcoming Opportunities

### Virtual New DAC Orientation: Registration

MDE and Pearson will provide a virtual New DAC Orientation. In the past, this orientation was provided as an in-person, full-day session. For this year, in order to provide the best training experience for participants, the New DAC Orientation will be a virtual event spread across three days for a few hours each day, and each session will cover different topics. MDE recommends that DACs attend the live sessions, if possible, as they will include interactive information sharing as well as time to discuss topics with colleagues. However, the presentation will be recorded for each day’s sessions if participants are unable to attend the sessions live. **Note: DACs should sign up for all three sessions, as each session will provide different information.**

MDE will provide an overview of the various roles and responsibilities of a DAC, the Minnesota Assessments, relevant MDE and WIDA systems, available resources, and training opportunities. Pearson will provide information on PearsonAccess Next, TestNav, reporting resources, and the Training Management System. Though designed as an introduction for new DACs in their first or second year, other relatively new DACs are also welcome to attend.

To prepare for the orientation, new DACs are encouraged to review the following New DAC training modules: *Understanding Training Requirements*, *Scheduling Testing*, and *Testing Policies and Procedures*. These modules are now available in the [Training Management System \(TMS\)](#) under the District Assessment Coordinator tab, New DAC Modules category. The *Minnesota Assessments Overview* module in this category is optional as the orientation will address much of the content in this module. Note: If you are a brand new DAC, you will use your district email to access TMS and select your district.

Note: This training will not provide information that may be specific to any changes for spring 2021 test administrations; it will provide information on what happens in a typical school year.

Registration links are in the following table. Details for joining the webinar will be provided once participants register.

DATE AND TIME	TOPIC AND DETAILS
Session 1: Tuesday, Oct. 20 9–11 a.m.	<a href="#">Register for Session 1</a>
Session 2: Wednesday, Oct. 21 9 a.m.–noon	<a href="#">Register for Session 2</a>
Session 3: Thursday, Oct. 22 9–11:30 a.m.	<a href="#">Register for Session 3</a>

### Opportunity for ACCESS Review

WIDA invites Minnesota educators to participate in their upcoming ACCESS review events. Note that these events are virtual, so no travel is necessary. DACs, please share this information with applicable educators in your district.

If educators are interested in being a part of one of the events listed below, [WIDA asks that they complete this brief survey](#) by Friday, Oct. 23, to indicate their interest. Participants will be selected based on experience, expertise, representation of regions, and diversity. If selected, WIDA will contact participants directly with event details and next steps.

See the [Oct. 7 Assessment Update](#) for more detailed information.

### Teaching and Learning Led by Evidence Webinar Series

This series of webinars is for any teacher or school leader who wants to center instruction on evidence of student learning. Kendra Olsen, MDE’s Outreach Specialist in Statewide Student Assessment and Data Analytics, will facilitate each session to engage teachers and school leaders in making sense of assessment and data, so that it can be used to build trust and collaboration and develop fluency in decision making to help close gaps in instruction and learning.

Registration is required for each WebEx session, using the links in the table below. Participants will earn one continuing education unit (CEU) for each session. All sessions will be recorded and posted for future reference. Please contact Kendra at [kendra.olsen@state.mn.us](mailto:kendra.olsen@state.mn.us) with any questions.

Note: The first three sessions have already taken place. Staff can join any session, and if someone did not attend the first three sessions, they are still encouraged to attend any session of interest.

SESSION #	DATE AND TIME	TOPIC AND DETAILS	LEARNING OBJECTIVES
4	Thursday, Oct. 22, 4–5 p.m.	Assessment <i>for</i> Learning – How do we know what our students really know?  <a href="#">Register for Session 4</a>	Participants will be able to:  Integrate simple, frequent “checks for understanding” into existing instructional plans that elicit an accurate picture of the depth of what students know  Improve rigor and alignment of formative assessment to the standards  Define success criteria for students
5	Thursday, Nov. 12, 4–5 p.m.	Assessment <i>of</i> Learning – Summative Assessments for your Classroom  <a href="#">Register for Session 5</a>	Participants will be able to:  Improve alignment of classroom assessments to standards  Increase the rigor of questions to eliminate student misconceptions  Ensure assessments measure the extent students have mastered the standards for an instructional unit

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STATEWIDE STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND DATA ANALYTICS

Minnesota Department of Education

[education.mn.gov](http://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](mailto:mde.testing@state.mn.us).