

AN UPDATE FROM ACADEMIC STANDARDS, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT—OCTOBER 20, 2021

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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](#). This website includes copies of the resources that will be used to participate in the orientation, a copy of the presentation, and tips for participating in Webex. Note: The presentation will open in Google Slides; go to File > Download and select Microsoft PowerPoint to download the presentation in PowerPoint. There are also sections 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.

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

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## ***User Account Management in PearsonAccess Next***

District Assessment Coordinators (DACs) must annually review their users to ensure accounts in PearsonAccess Next are up to date and current. DAC and Assessment Administrator (AA) users can create, edit, delete, and

enable other user accounts, as well as reset passwords, in PearsonAccess Next. User accounts can be created and maintained either manually or through a file export/import. For more information, refer to the [PearsonAccess Next User Accounts Guide](#).

Please note:

- For security purposes, passwords automatically expire every 180 days.
  - Users should follow the instructions in the auto-generated emails to reset their password or select [Forgot Password](#).
  - DACs and AAs can reset other user passwords.
- User accounts are disabled after 240 days of inactivity.
  - By spring testing, most accounts are disabled, as users do not log in between test administrations.
  - Disabled accounts can be enabled either manually or through a file export/import. Once enabled, users must reset their password and log in to activate their account.
  - Consider encouraging users to reset their passwords, or reset user passwords in PearsonAccess Next in the fall (October/November). Note: Users must sign-in to PearsonAccess Next to ensure their accounts are enabled when spring testing starts.
- User accounts are deleted after 390 day of inactivity.
  - Deleted accounts can only be restored manually in PearsonAccess Next.
  - Once restored, most deleted accounts need to be enabled.
  - Once enabled, users must reset their password and log in to activate their account.

A high-level overview of these tasks, including a proposed timeline for user management activities, is available in the [User Account Management in PearsonAccess Next](#).

Additionally, a short video training *User Management in PearsonAccess Next* is available in the [Training Management System \(TMS\)](#) (in the District Assessment tab under the Pearson Video Trainings category). This video training goes through the process of creating, editing, deleting, enabling, and restoring accounts, both manually and through a file upload.

Contact the Pearson help desk with any questions at 888-817-8659 or [submit a Pearson help desk request](#).

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## ***Calculator Type for Paper MCA***

For paper administrations of MCA, students must be familiar with the functionality of the handheld calculator prior to test administration.

**New for 2021–22:** The following table specifies which type of handheld calculator may be used by grade and subject; only those listed below by grade level may be used. Previously, the types were listed as recommendations, but it has been determined that using a more technologically advanced calculator than the one specified provides assistance that invalidates what is being assessed (e.g., using a scientific calculator instead of a four-function calculator for grade 5). Using a less technologically advanced calculator than the type specified (e.g., using a four-function calculator instead of a graphing calculator for grade 8) is allowed but not recommended as students do not have the same access to additional functions the calculator provides.

### Calculator Type Required for Paper MCAs

TEST	TYPE OF CALCULATOR REQUIRED
Grades 3–5 Mathematics MCA and all grades of Science MCA	Standard or four function
Grades 6–7 Mathematics MCA	Scientific
Grades 8 and 11 Mathematics MCA	Graphing

Note: Web-based calculators or calculator apps accessed from another device (e.g., Chromebook) are not allowed. In addition, graphing calculators must either have the memory cleared before and after each testing session, or have a feature that temporarily disables Flash applications and calculator files (e.g., TI-NSpire has “Press to Test” mode).

Refer to Chapter 8 and Appendix B of the [Procedures Manual](#) for more information on calculator requirements.

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## Required Distribution of Individual Student Reports (ISRs)

Individual Student Reports (ISRs) must be provided to parents/guardians no later than Dec. 1.

Each district decides if the paper copies of reports are distributed or if electronic versions are provided (i.e., through a secure parent portal). If provided electronically, the final version from WIDA AMS or Published Reports in PearsonAccess Next must be used. Paper reports must be securely disposed of if providing electronically.

Districts determine how to distribute ISRs following best practices for data privacy. Regardless of how reports are distributed, however, districts should consider how to provide families with information (e.g., a letter or flyer, in discussions at conferences) about how the results are used in the context of other district and school information.

More information on ISRs and their distribution is available in Chapter 11 of the [Procedures Manual](#), starting on page 225.

## ***Student Data Privacy***

When contacting MDE or a service provider with a question about a specific student's test or situation, only use the student's MARSS number. For student privacy, **do not send student names or other identifiable information in an email or a help desk request**; this applies to screenshots or attachments as well.

If specific student data needs to be sent to MDE, districts can upload information securely using the File Transfer in Test WES.

## ***ACCESS for ELLs Writing Bias & Sensitivity Review***

WIDA is seeking educators to review ACCESS writing items for grades 1–3, 4–8, and 6–12. The purpose of the Bias & Sensitivity Review is to ensure that test items are free of material that might favor any subgroup of students over another on the basis of gender, race or ethnicity, home language, religion, culture, region, or socio-economic status. The review also helps ensure that test items are free of material that might be upsetting to students.

The review session schedule is as follows:

- **Training:** Wednesday, Nov. 10, from 4–5:30 p.m.
- **Grades 1–3, Grades 4–8, and Grades 6–12 Review Groups:** Thursday, Nov. 11, from 4–6 p.m.

Educators who would like to participate need to confirm their interest by registering through the secure [Bias & Sensitivity Registration](#) link by this Friday, Oct. 22.

In the registration, participants will need to:

- Confirm your contact email and mailing address
- Provide a current resume or CV
- Agree to the ACCESS for ELLs Writing Bias & Sensitivity Review Nondisclosure Agreement and Photo/Video/Audio Permission

Please contact Drake Accardi at [daccardi@wisc.edu](mailto:daccardi@wisc.edu) with any questions or concerns.

## ***Odds and Ends***

Virginie Sanchez, who answers the majority of the phone calls and emails districts have about testing, will be out of the office Oct. 20–22. During this time, other assessment staff are answering questions from districts sent to [mde.testing@state.mn.us](mailto:mde.testing@state.mn.us), and you may see a delayed response time.

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## ***Upcoming Opportunities***

### **Virtual New DAC Orientation**

The virtual New DAC Orientation is spread across three days for a few hours each day. DACs should sign up for all three sessions, as each session will provide different information. Refer to the [Sept. 29, 2021 Assessment Update](#) for more details on topics and prerequisites.

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 all three sessions live.

### **Registration**

Registration links for each session are below. Details for joining the webinar will be provided once participants register.

- [Register for Session 1](#), Tuesday, Oct. 26, 9–11 a.m.
- [Register for Session 2](#), Wednesday, Oct. 27, 9–11 a.m.
- [Register for Session 3](#), Thursday, Oct. 28, 9–11:30 a.m.

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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).