AN UPDATE FROM ACADEMIC STANDARDS, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT—DECEMBER 8, 2021

QUICK LINKS	IMPORTANT DATES
- [MDE Employment Opportunities](#) - [Online Schools](#) - [Preparing for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS](#) - [Preparing for MCA and MTAS](#) - [Technology Preparation](#) - [Upcoming Opportunities](#) - [Tech Update](#)	*Nov. 29:* Pretest Editing open in Test WES *Dec. 16:* Deadline to submit MARSS data for EL students to be sent for loading student records into WIDA AMS and for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS preprinted student labels *Dec. 17:* Deadline to indicate the number of online testers for grades 1–12, and order test materials during Materials Ordering in WIDA AMS

MDE Employment Opportunities

Training Visual Graphics Assessment Specialist–Posting Extended

The Academic Standards, Instruction and Assessment division is currently seeking a training visual graphics assessment specialist to join the Program Management team.

If you are interested (or know someone who may be interested) in a new and challenging opportunity, consult the complete revised position description and application instructions on the [State of Minnesota Careers](#) website and **apply by Dec. 16.** The Job ID is 50603.

Ethnic Studies Specialist

The Academic Standards, Instruction and Assessment division is currently seeking an Ethnic Studies Specialist who will have a pivotal role in leading collaborative statewide initiatives to strengthen the capacity of Minnesota's schools to provide high quality Ethnic Studies education to ensure that all students achieve state academic standards and are prepared with knowledge and skills for postsecondary and career success. This position will work in collaboration with the Indigenous Education Specialist position listed below.

If you are interested (or know someone who may be interested) in a new and challenging opportunity, consult the complete revised position description and application instructions on the [State of Minnesota Careers](#) website and **apply by Dec. 27.** The Job ID is 50339.

Indigenous Education Specialist

The Office of American Indian Education is currently seeking an Indigenous Education Specialist who will work in collaboration with the Ethnic Studies Specialist position listed above. They will lead collaborative statewide initiatives to strengthen the capacity of Minnesota's schools so that they can provide high quality Indigenous education. The Indigenous Education Specialist will help districts to fully implement the standards through aligned instruction, curriculum, assessment, and professional development.

If you are interested (or know someone who may be interested) in a new and challenging opportunity, consult the complete revised position description and application instructions on the State of Minnesota Careers website and **apply by Dec. 27.** The Job ID is 50940.

Online Schools

Students enrolled in online schools (School Classification 46), including students attending online programs within districts, must participate in the applicable standards-based and English language proficiency accountability assessments in person. Because of the technical requirements involved, only district-owned computers/devices can be used for online tests; student-owned computers/devices are not permitted. All security and test administration procedures must be followed even when administering tests in settings outside of a school, and applicable testing windows must be followed.

State-approved online providers typically do not provide transportation, but often provide testing sites around the state within an hour's drive for enrolled students. Additionally, students enrolled in online schools are not eligible for USDA's nutrition programs and online schools are not required to provide meals to online students coming to school to participate in statewide assessments. For more information, refer to the Online Learning page or contact mde.onlinelearning@state.mn.us.

It is the online school's responsibility (or the district to which the online program belongs) to test these students in person following all required procedures. More information is available in the *Procedures Manual*, starting on page 199.

Preparing for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS

Initial Material Ordering

Districts must indicate the following information in WIDA AMS by Dec. 17:

- The number of online testers for each grade band

- The number of kindergarten testers

- The quantities of large print, braille, and paper ACCESS test booklets

- Alternate ACCESS test booklets

For more information, please refer to the *WIDA Assessment Management System (WIDA AMS) User Guide* (No log in required. In the second paragraph under the first heading, select "click here (login not required)" > on the Training Materials page, click the Show Documents button to display all documents > from the list of documents, locate and download the user guide).

Note that both the *Online ACCESS for ELLs: Administration* and the *Paper ACCESS for ELLs: Administration* assessment trainings (login required) available on the WIDA Secure Portal include modules on ordering materials.

User Account Management

District Assessment Coordinators (DACs) must annually review their users to ensure accounts in the WIDA Secure Portal and WIDA AMS are up to date.

- WIDA Secure Portal: District-level users can add, remove, or change the level of access for anyone at the district or school level. Review the recording of the *Pre-Testing: ACCESS for ELLs for New District Test Coordinators* on the WIDA Secure Portal under Webinars for additional information. Please contact WIDA at help@wida.us or 866-276-7735 for additional support.

- WIDA AMS (DRC): District-levels users can add, remove, or change the level of access at the school level. Detailed instructions are available in the *WIDA Assessment Management System (WIDA AMS) User Guide* linked above. Please contact DRC at WIDA@datarecognitioncorp.com or 855-787-9615 for additional support.

Note: Send DAC-level user account creation requests to mde.testing@state.mn.us for approval.

Preparing for MCA and MTAS

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. 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*.

Note the following important information regarding PearsonAccess Next accounts:

- For security purposes, passwords automatically expire every 180 days.

- o Users should follow the instructions in the auto-generated emails to reset their password or select [Forgot Password](#).

- o DACs and AAs can reset other user passwords.

- User accounts are disabled after 240 days of inactivity.

  - o By spring testing each year, most accounts have been disabled, as users generally do not log in between test administrations.

  - o 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.

  - o For active user accounts that will become disabled by spring testing, consider encouraging users to reset their passwords, or, as a DAC, you can reset user passwords in PearsonAccess Next. Note: Users must sign-in to PearsonAccess Next to ensure their accounts are enabled when spring testing starts.

- User accounts are deleted after 390 days of inactivity.

  - o Deleted accounts can only be restored manually in PearsonAccess Next.

  - o Once restored, most deleted accounts need to be enabled.

  - o 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 infographic](#)*.

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

If you have additional questions, please contact the Pearson help desk at 888-817-8659 or [submit a Pearson help desk request](#).

DAC Accounts in PearsonAccess Next

If your district has a new DAC, it is important to update the contact information in [MDE-ORG](#) as soon as possible. Once Pearson receives DAC and Alternate DAC contact information from MDE-ORG, they use it to create DAC accounts in PearsonAccess Next within 1–2 business days.

If your DAC account was created 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: Users with District Assessment Coordinator (DAC) and Assessment Administrator (AA) user roles are able to track staff training in the Training Management System (TMS). Starting in January, Pearson will provide new users Admin feature access more frequently than during the rest of the year. If a user has had a PearsonAccess Next DAC or AA role for more than two weeks and does not see the TMS Admin feature, contact Pearson at 888-817-

8659 or submit a Pearson help desk request. If a DAC or AA user account becomes disabled or inactive in PearsonAccess Next, the user will no longer have the Admin feature in TMS.

Technology Preparation

Consult the Tech Update section below for information on upcoming trainings for Technology Coordinators.

Upcoming Opportunities

COMPASS Data and Assessment Literacy Webinars

MDE's COMPASS team hosted a Data and Assessment Literacy webinar on Nov. 30; they will host another webinar tomorrow, Dec. 9, from 9:30–11:30 a.m. in Webex. During these webinars, an overview of the data and assessment literacy subcomponents in the MnMTSS framework will be provided, including future topics and resources about how to use meaningful evidence of student learning to guide instruction and improve practices. This will provide the groundwork for future COMPASS sessions specific to literacy, math, and school climate and mental health. The same information is presented at both webinars.

New DAC Pearson Basics Training (1–2 years)

Pearson will provide an overview of its systems for new District Assessment Coordinators (DACs) in their first or second year tomorrow, Dec. 9, from 2–3:30 p.m. Select this link to join the Dec. 9 New DAC Pearson Basics Training (passcode: NEWDAC).

The training will focus on user management and preliminary reports in PearsonAccess Next, as well as the Training Management System (TMS). The PowerPoint can be accessed on the MDE & Pearson DAC Trainings website under Pearson Trainings. Note: The PowerPoint will open in Google Slides. Go to File > Download and select Microsoft PowerPoint to download the presentation in PowerPoint. A recording of the training will be posted to the Training Management System (TMS) on Friday, Dec. 17 (on the District Assessment Coordinator tab under Pearson Recorded Webinars).

To prepare for the training, the *User Management in PearsonAccess Next* and *Training Management System* short video trainings are posted to the TMS for review (on the District Assessment Coordinator tab under Pearson Video Trainings).

Virtual DAC Test Administration Training: Registration

MDE will provide the DAC Test Administration Training virtually on Tuesday, Dec. 14, from 9–11 a.m. MDE will record the session for DACs who are unable to join the live webinar.

MDE will focus on new and clarified information from the *Procedures Manual* for the 2021–22 school year. The recorded training will be available on the Training Management System (TMS) on Friday afternoon, Dec. 17 (on the Districts Assessment Coordinator tab under MDE Recorded Webinars).

The Test Administration Training is required for all DACs in order to prepare for spring testing; all DACs must attend the MDE webinar or view the MDE recording. Note: Attendees will have their participation automatically indicated in the TMS following the live webinar; for those viewing the recording, participation will appear upon completion.

Register for the Dec. 14 DAC Test Administration Training. Details for joining the webinar will be provided once participants register, and the presentation handout will be provided on MDE & Pearson DAC Trainings site by noon on Monday, Dec. 13.

ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS Webinars

WIDA and DRC will be hosting the During Testing: Managing Students in WIDA AMS – ACCESS Paper on Tuesday, Dec. 14, from 1–2 p.m. More information can be found in the WIDA Secure Portal on the Webinars page. There is no need to register in advance.

Join the During Testing: Managing Students in WIDA AMS – ACCESS Paper webinar on Tuesday, Dec. 14, from 1–2 p.m.

Recordings of these webinars will be posted in the WIDA Secure Portal (on the Webinars page) within a week of each event.

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Tech Update

Pearson Technology Trainings

The recording of the *Technology Coordinator Overview* will be posted to the Training Management System (TMS) on Friday, Dec. 10. This training provides an overview of technology systems and resources for preparations of the 2022 MCA online test administration. Pearson will host a live training on Tuesday, Jan. 11. Refer to the *Upcoming Technology Trainings* document under Additional Technology Resources for more details.

Contact the Pearson help desk at 888-817-8659 or submit a Pearson help desk request online with any questions on the online testing infrastructure setup. In addition to the Pearson help desk, Technology Coordinators may also utilize Pearson's Technology Office Hours and schedule a one-on-one virtual meeting with a technology field engineer to discuss specific setup instructions or other challenges. Keep in communication with your DAC about any issues encountered as you prepare for testing.

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