

AN UPDATE FROM STATEWIDE STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND DATA ANALYTICS—DECEMBER 23, 2020

QUICK LINKS	IMPORTANT DATES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2020–21 Minnesota Assessments Guidance during COVID-19 • Clarification for Nutrition and Transportation Costs • TMS Enhancement Delayed • Odds and Ends • Upcoming Opportunities • Tech Update 	<p>Jan. 4–March 19: Complete administration tasks in WIDA AMS for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS</p> <p>Jan. 15: Receive paper test materials and student labels for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS</p> <p>Jan. 22: Deadline in Test WES for changes affecting initial test materials shipment for MCA/MTAS, ISR delivery confirmation, and MCA/MTAS test material delivery options</p> <p>Jan. 25–March 19: ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS testing window</p>

2020–21 Minnesota Assessments Guidance during COVID-19

The *2020–21 Minnesota Assessments Guidance during COVID-19* is attached while it is in the process of being posted to the MDE website; the link will be provided once available. This document is meant to provide guidance for DACs related to the administration of the Minnesota Assessments (ACCESS, Alternate ACCESS, MCA, and MTAS) during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is intended to be flexible so it can adapt to the changing situation, and it will be updated as required. It is also meant to supplement the policy and procedure requirements outlined in the [Procedures Manual](#); in general terms, the information in the manual should be followed unless revised guidance is included in the document. The information provided will be the basis of the Jan. 12 DAC Test Administration Training. At this time, additional office hours for DACs are not being scheduled prior to the Jan. 12 training; if this changes, MDE will send communication to DACs the week of Jan. 4.

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Clarification for Nutrition and Transportation Costs

The Statewide Student Assessment staff have received clarification on two frequently asked questions from districts regarding the logistics of administering assessments this year.

Nutrition Costs

School nutrition programs are able to serve and claim meals for students who are attending school for statewide assessments. MDE recognizes there may be overlap in the meals a student receives and encourages schools to do the best that is logistically possible not to duplicate meals. For distance learners who receive a multi-day meal pack, schools might consider options such as a special “assessment week meal pack/delivery” that would account for the meals the students receive at school. Districts should also communicate to families that students will be receiving meals at school on statewide assessments days. DACs should direct meal service questions to their district food service director. This information will also be communicated to district food service directors.

Transportation Costs

A portion of the general education revenue that all public school students are generating is intended to be available for student transportation. The revenue generated is not dependent on the learning model. Additional funding for transportation costs specifically related to administering statewide assessments is not currently being proposed.

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TMS Enhancement Delayed

The Training Management System (TMS) enhancement described in the Dec. 9 and 16 *Assessment Updates* was not available as of Monday, Dec. 21, as was originally communicated. This enhancement, when in place, will show trainings posted to multiple tabs, categories, and courses (i.e., *Test Security Training* and *Active Monitoring*) as completed across all locations when completed once in TMS. The trainings posted to the TMS on Dec. 16 are still available and staff can complete these as normal.

More information will be communicated when the enhancement is available. Contact the Pearson help desk at 888-817-8659 or [submit a Pearson help desk request](#) with any additional questions.

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Odds & Ends

- **MDE Closed for Holidays:** Due to the upcoming holidays, the mde.testing@state.mn.us inbox will not be monitored on Dec. 25 or Jan. 1.
- **Next Assessment Update:** There will be no *Assessment Update* sent on Dec. 30. The next *Assessment Update* will be sent on Jan. 6. If essential information needs to be shared with districts before Jan. 6, MDE will send a targeted email to districts as needed.

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Upcoming Opportunities

Virtual DAC Test Administration Training: Registration

MDE will provide the DAC Test Administration Training virtually on Jan. 12 from 8:30–11:30 a.m. MDE will record the session for DACs who are unable to join the live webinar. During this training, MDE will provide information and detailed guidance on preparing for 2021 test administrations. MDE will also address new and clarified information from the [Procedures Manual](#), focusing on the most applicable changes for test administration this year.

[Register for the Jan. 12 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](#) closer to the training. Contact mde.testing@state.mn.us to request a reasonable accommodation to participate in this event. Note: MDE requires a two-week advance notice to provide accommodations and 48-hour notice to cancel the request.

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Tech Update

Technology Communication for ACCESS

DRC Customer Support sent out an email to District Technology Coordinators (DTCs) on Dec. 16 regarding ACCESS and screener testing device preparation. DACs or DTCs can access the information electronically as well: [ACCESS and Screener Online Testing Device Preparation](#).

WIDA Webinar: Technology Troubleshooting

WIDA will host the *Technology Troubleshooting* webinar on Thursday, Jan. 7, from 1–2 p.m. [Join the Technology Troubleshooting webinar on Jan. 7](#). This webinar is designed for District Technology Coordinators and will include information on the following:

- An overview of the various error messages
- Common troubleshooting solutions

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STATEWIDE STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND DATA ANALYTICS

Minnesota Department of Education

education.mn.gov > Districts, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Statewide Testing

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