

AN UPDATE FROM ACADEMIC STANDARDS, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT—FEBRUARY 2, 2022

QUICK LINKS	IMPORTANT DATES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • February New DAC Q&A: Save the Date • Public Comment for ESSA State Plan Amendment on Accountability • Spring 2022 Information for Families • Alternate Assessment: ARC Process for 2021–22 • ACCESS and Alternate Reminders and Updates • Pretest Editing Remains Open for MCA/ MTAS • New Educator Resources for Science MCA-IV • Odds and Ends • Upcoming Opportunities • Tech Update 	<p>Jan. 21–March 18: ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS additional test materials ordering window</p> <p>Jan. 31–March 25: ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS testing window</p>

February New DAC Q&A: Save the Date

The February MDE Q&A webinar for New DACs will be held on Tuesday, Feb. 22, from 2–3 pm. Experienced DACs are also welcome to attend. The prerequisites for this webinar are as follows:

- *Understanding Student Precode* training in the [Training Management System \(TMS\)](#) (on the District Assessment Coordinator tab, under the New DAC Training category)
- Excerpts from Chapter 11 of the [Procedures Manual](#) related to preliminary results:
 - Preliminary Student-Level Results (pages 220–221)
 - Embargoed Final Assessment Results (pages 222–224)

Note: Q&A webinars are intended to provide a conversational setting where new DACs can receive support on existing resources and upcoming tasks. Q&A webinars are not recorded as they are not trainings and do not provide any new content, as all answers are available in the prerequisites.

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Public Comment for ESSA State Plan Amendment on Accountability

The article below was shared with superintendents and charter leaders.

MDE is preparing to submit an amendment to its ESSA state plan section on school accountability. This amendment will include short-term adaptations to the pandemic as well as other, more enduring changes that reflect input and feedback from educators, advocates, families, and tribal communities since Minnesota's initial state plan was approved in 2018.

[A redlined document](#) showing the changes in the context of the accountability section of Minnesota's current state plan, as well as [a plain language summary](#) of the changes, have been posted for public comment on the [Minnesota State Plan](#) page on MDE's website. Public comment will be open through Thursday, Feb. 3. Public comment can be submitted to MDE.ESSA@state.mn.us.

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Spring 2022 Information for Families

MDE has prepared information about Spring 2022 statewide test administrations that districts can provide to families. There is one document for ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS and one for MCA/MTAS on the [Students and Families Statewide Testing page](#). Translations will be provided and MDE will communicate when they are posted. Providing these documents is not required, and districts may use any of the information in their communications as needed.

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Alternate Assessment: ARC Process for 2021–22

As a continuation of this process started in 2020, MDE contacted district leaders (Special Ed Directors, DACs, and Superintendents/Directors) with details about how to participate in this year's Assurance, Rationale and Context (ARC) process. This communication went out on Monday, Jan. 31. The deadline to respond will be March 4. Only the assurance step needs to be completed.

For more information about the federal requirements and the work Minnesota has done pertaining to alternate assessment participation, refer to the *Overview of the 1 Percent Cap and Alternate Assessment Participation in Minnesota* on the [Minnesota Tests](#) webpage.

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ACCESS and Alternate Reminders and Updates

The testing window for the ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs is now open. Below are a few reminders for testing.

- Districts must make sure they are prepared to administer the grades 1–12 ACCESS online using the available [technology resources](#).
- Districts will need to manually add any newly enrolled or newly identified English learners directly into WIDA AMS.
- Paper test materials were recently delivered to districts. The additional orders window is now open.
 - The Human Reader for items (HI) and Human Reader for response options (HR) accommodations are now consolidated as the new In-person human reader (IR) accommodation. Also, the Human Reader for repeat of items (RI) and Human Reader for repeat of response options (RR) accommodations are now consolidated as the new Repeat in-person human reader (RP) accommodation. Refer to the [Accessibility and Accommodations Manual](#) for more information.
 - ACCESS test materials for grades 6–12 are now available in UEB Technical, in addition to UEB with Nemeth Code, in both contracted and uncontracted braille. Refer to the *Accessibility and Accommodations Manual* for more information.
 - WIDA requests that districts use both the district overage and school overage before requesting additional orders. Districts should combine all additional material needs from individual buildings as one district order, if possible.

For any questions about technology preparation, manually adding students in WIDA AMS, or ordering additional test materials, contact the DRC help desk at WIDA@datarecognitioncorp.com or 855-787-9615.

ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS Irregularities

The *ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS Irregularities 2021–22* document is available on the [Minnesota](#) page of the WIDA website, under the Manuals, Guides and Test Materials expandable header.

While not an exhaustive list, this irregularities document outlines examples of possible test administration situations or misadministrations, the likely outcomes, and which actions are needed, if any, by the district, MDE, or DRC. In most cases, the District Assessment Coordinator (DAC) or English learner (EL) staff will contact the DRC Help Desk and provide detailed information about the issue that occurred and the student or students who were affected. In situations where DRC needs state approval, they will refer the DAC or EL coordinator to contact MDE.

Common Misadministrations

MDE has noticed two common misadministrations across the state. Consider reminding your Test Administrators to be diligent in order to prevent these situations:

- Students are logging in with the wrong test ticket. Be sure Test Administrators distribute the correct test tickets to students and that each student verifies they are logging in with the correct information. This check is part of the *Testing Administrator's Script* that is required to be read before students begin testing.
- Students are taking the wrong test (ACCESS instead of Alternate ACCESS) or the wrong mode of the test (online instead of paper). Ensure that Test Administrators know which students are to be provided with appropriate general supports and/or accommodations, as indicated in their IEP or 504 plan, and any related specific test administration procedures prior to the testing session.

Active Monitoring

Test Administrators must actively monitor students throughout the entire test administration and ensure that all students are working independently and making progress in their tests. They cannot complete other tasks, including lesson planning, grading papers, or talking casually with other staff.

Materials on Walls or Student Desks

Any materials used for a Language Instruction Educational Program (LIEP) should be covered or removed during test administration. If testing is taking place in the EL classroom, all materials on walls or student desks that pertain to language instruction should be covered or removed. Although content is referenced in the test items, a student's content knowledge is not part of the language proficiency scoring. For ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, standards-based materials on the walls or on a student's desk can stay as determined by the district. If there are questions about whether the materials are considered content or for language instruction, then cover or remove them.

Test Security Reminders

Per Minnesota Statutes 13.34, test content is nonpublic data. DACs should remind their staff that it is not acceptable to copy, reproduce, retain, or use any portion of test items or test materials in a manner inconsistent with test security policies and procedures, including but not limited to:

- Capturing and/or sharing any secure test content.
- Making a copy of a test.
- Allowing untrained staff to take any part in the testing process, including handling test tickets or having access to securely stored test materials.

Refer to Chapter 5 of the [Procedures Manual](#) for additional information on test security requirements.

Missing Pages in the Grades 9-12 Tier B/C Large Print Test Booklet

It was recently discovered that the ACCESS grades 9-12 Tier B/C Large Print Test Booklets are missing several pages at the end.

DRC is working to correct the issue and will send you a replacement as soon as possible. Only the large print test booklet will be sent. Everything else in the large print kit is correct as is. DRC will communicate the delivery date to districts once the replacement test booklets are ready to be shipped.

Please note:

- Upon shipping of the replacement large print test booklet, districts will receive tracking information from UPS.
- When materials are returned to DRC after testing, please return the Large Print test booklet from the initial shipment (the one missing pages) as well as the replacement Large Print test booklet.

Contact DRC Customer Service with any questions at WIDA@DataRecognitionCorp.com or call 1-855-787-9615.

Page Missing from the Print Version of the ACCESS for ELLs Test Administrator Manual (Repeat)

The print copy of the *ACCESS for ELLs Test Administrator Manual* has an incomplete version of the WIDA Writing Rubric Pre-K – Kindergarten, which is located in the appendix. When scoring the Kindergarten ACCESS Writing test, test administrators should either refer to the online version of *the ACCESS for ELLs Test Administrator Manual*, located in the [WIDA Secure Portal](#), or the standalone [WIDA Writing Rubric Pre-K – Kindergarten](#). A link to this resource may also be found in the WIDA Secure Portal *Kindergarten ACCESS for ELLs: Administration and Scoring* training course.

DRC System Status Webpage

Please refer to the [Tech Update](#) section below for information on the [DRC System Status webpage](#).

Administering ACCESS for ELLs or WIDA Screener on iPad Devices (Repeat)

Please refer to the [Tech Update](#) section below for information on using iPad devices with OS 14.x or higher to administer ACCESS for ELLs or WIDA Screener.

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Pretest Editing Remains Open for MCA/ MTAS

Throughout the window, DACs use Pretest Editing in Test WES to do the following on the Precode Search and Edit Screen:

- Add or remove accommodations and linguistic supports.
- Change test assignments for MCA and MTAS.
- Change the high school science send indicator.

- Assign custom groups.

Districts may also use a file upload for indicating accommodations/linguistic supports, assigning custom group, and changing the science send indicator from “Y” to “N.” Making changes using a file upload can now be completed throughout the testing window. For further information, refer to the [Test WES Pretest Editing User Guide](#).

Note: Any paper test materials needed based on these changes must be ordered in additional orders in PearsonAccess Next and will not be received in the initial test materials shipment. The additional orders window opens on Feb. 22.

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New Educator Resources for Science MCA-IV

Please share the following information with your educators.

The [Testing 1, 2, 3 MCA Content Resources](#) webpage under Science Resources now has released examples of Science MCA-IV items and Educator Guides. The purpose of these resources is to give Minnesota education professionals a few examples of phenomenon-based, multidimensional items aligned to the 2019 Minnesota Science Standards. The guides include information on benchmark alignment and student response data, to provide context for the online released items.

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Odds and Ends

Professional Learning Webinar for Kindergarten ACCESS Test Administrators

The recording of the WIDA Kindergarten ACCESS Test Administrator Training webinar held on Tuesday, Jan. 25, is posted on the WIDA Secure Portal under Webinars (select Recorded under format filter).

Note: This training does not replace the required Kindergarten Training Course on the WIDA Secure Portal.

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Upcoming Opportunities

PearsonAccess Next Training: New DACs (1–2 years) (Repeat)

Pearson will provide a comprehensive overview of PearsonAccess Next for first and second year District Assessment Coordinators (DACs) next Tuesday, Feb. 8, from 1–3 p.m. [Select this link to join the Feb. 8 PearsonAccess Next: New DACs \(1-2 years\) Training](#) (passcode: PearsonAcc).

For MCA, the training will focus on viewing student data, viewing accommodations and linguistic supports, creating and managing test sessions, printing student testing tickets and session rosters, resuming student tests,

and indicating test codes. For MTAS, the training will cover assigning teachers to student tests, entering LCI and student scores, indicating test codes, and score entry status reports.

The PowerPoint will be available on the MDE & Pearson DAC Trainings website under Pearson Trainings on Friday, Feb. 4. Note: The PowerPoint will open in Google Slides. Go to File > Download and select Microsoft PowerPoint to download the presentation in PowerPoint.

This training will be recorded and posted to the [Training Management System \(TMS\)](#) on Friday, Feb. 18 (on the District Assessment Coordinator tab under Pearson Recorded Webinars).

MDE Employment Opportunity: English Language Assessment Specialist

The Academic Standards, Instruction and Assessment division is currently seeking an English language assessment specialist to join the Program Management team.

Key responsibilities of the English language assessment specialist include:

- Serving EL students as the EL content expert in relation to English Language Proficiency Accountability Assessments (ELPAA) and Standards Based Accountability Assessments (SBAA);
- Directing, coordinating, and monitoring the administration and participation of English learners on ACCESS for ELLs and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs;
- Collaborating in the development of testing materials, training, and documentation to increase understanding and adherence to Minnesota assessment programs and standardized statewide testing (MCA, MTAS, ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS) in terms of English learner participation.

If you are interested (or know someone who may be interested) in a new and challenging opportunity, consult the complete position description and application instructions on the [State of Minnesota Careers](#) website and **apply by Feb. 10**. The Job ID is 52200.

Summer 2022 MCA and Alternate MCA Review Committees

Every year, through Educator and Community Review Committees, Minnesota educators and community members across the state bring invaluable classroom experience, perspectives from teaching diverse students, and engagement with Minnesota Academic Standards to the test development process. This committee participation ensures that the content and question type align closely with best practices in classroom instruction. Each committee is a separate entity that meets for two to four days. When the committee completes their specific review task, a new committee is formed for the next task in the test development process.

As MDE starts to prepare invitations for virtual Educator Review Committees this summer, please encourage your district's math, reading, science, English learner, and special education staff to consider [registering in order to be considered for one of these future meetings](#). Share the flyers for MCA and Alternate MCA Educator Review Committees posted on the [Educator Review Committee](#) page of the MDE website with the educators in your district to provide more information on these committees.

Tech Update

Administering ACCESS for ELLs or WIDA Screener on iPad Devices (Repeat)

If you are using iPad devices with OS level 14.x or higher to administer ACCESS for ELLs or WIDA Screener Online testing, you will need to manually enable Cross-Website Tracking on each iPad testing device. This feature must be enabled due to an enhanced privacy feature, Intelligent Tracking Prevention (ITP), released by Apple.

If the iPad device does not have the Cross-Website Tracking feature enabled, student testing in DRC INSIGHT will be interrupted by Content Retrieval Errors. In this case, student testing cannot resume until the feature is enabled.

To manually enable Cross-Website Tracking, perform the following steps on **each** iPad:

1. Navigate to **Settings**.
2. Click **DRC INSIGHT Online Assessments**.
3. Toggle **Allow Cross-Website Tracking** to on.

Refer to the *Technology User Guide*, located on [WIDA AMS](#) for further information, as needed. (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 the *Technology User Guide*. Please contact DRC Customer Support at wida@datarecognitioncorp.com or (855) 787-9615 with any questions.

DRC System Status Webpage

The [DRC System Status webpage](#) provides real-time updates on operations of WIDA AMS, INSIGHT, the Testing Site Manager, and Educator Scoring. DACs, Technology Coordinators, and other district staff can subscribe (by selecting the button in the upper right corner of the webpage) to receive email updates when the status of any system changes. Because states in the WIDA consortium begin testing in December and some end testing in May, email updates will be sent to subscribers even outside of the Minnesota ACCESS testing window.