

AN UPDATE FROM ACADEMIC STANDARDS, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT—FEB. 15, 2023

QUICK LINKS	IMPORTANT DATES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cell Phone and Device Policy • Common ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS Misadministrations • Updates on the Alternate ACCESS Field Test • Initial Shipment of MCA and MTAS Test Materials • PearsonAccess Next Setup and Preparation • PearsonAccess Next and TestNav Changes for 2023 MCA and MTAS Test Administrations • After Hours Testing • MTAS Administration 2023 Informational Meeting – Recording and Reading Sample Tasks Now Available • Odds & Ends 	<p>Jan. 9–March 24: Complete administration tasks in WIDA AMS</p> <p>Jan. 30–March 24: ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS testing window</p> <p>Feb. 20: Start completing administration tasks in PearsonAccess Next</p> <p>Feb. 21–23 or Feb. 28–March 2 Receive MCA paper and MTAS test materials</p>

Cell Phone and Device Policy

MDE has received several reports of students having accessed their cell phones during testing. **Students must NOT use or access cell phones, wearable technology, or any other devices at any time during a testing session, including during breaks or when they finish testing for the day.** “Wearable” technology is defined as devices that may be worn on a student’s body that can electronically send, receive, or capture information (for example, smartwatches, fitness trackers, Bluetooth headphones). District and School Assessment Coordinators must develop and train staff on school-specific cell phone/device policies and procedures. Test Monitors and Test Administrators, in turn, must understand how to implement these policies and procedures prior to test administration. As technology continues to change, districts will need to discuss the types of technology students have and the plans for ensuring students do not access them during testing.

Refer to pages 186–187 of the [Procedures Manual](#) for additional information.

Common ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS Misadministrations

The following misadministrations are common 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. Ensure 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 (for example, ACCESS instead of Alternate ACCESS) or the wrong mode of the test (for example, 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.

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Updates on the Alternate ACCESS Field Test

The Alternate ACCESS field test window opened on Feb. 14 and ends on April 17. As field testing begins, please keep the following important points in mind.

- Initial shipments of Alternate ACCESS field test materials were delivered to districts the week of Feb. 6–10. The materials are clearly marked with the words “Field Test” on every cover as well as by an image of the field test guide dog mascot, Candoo. The Alternate ACCESS field test features different label colors than those used for other ACCESS test materials. WIDA and DRC recommend that Alternate ACCESS field test materials be kept separate from operational Alternate ACCESS test materials.
- Additional materials ordering (AMO) for the Alternate ACCESS field test can now be requested using the field test AMO Form. The link to this form was included with the field test materials and is also highlighted in WIDA AMS at the top of the Additional Materials ordering tab. The AMO Form for the field test is separate from the additional materials ordering completed in WIDA AMS for the operational ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS.
- Students who are participating in the field test should first complete the operational Alternate ACCESS or the Kindergarten ACCESS.
- For kindergarten English learners, the decision to participate in the field test should be made by the student’s IEP team, including the student’s parents/caregivers, following the [Alternate ACCESS for ELLs Participation Criteria Decision Tree](#). Note that the decision to participate in the Alternate ACCESS should be revisited each year; therefore, participation in the Alternate ACCESS field test as a kindergartener does not require that a student participate in the Alternate ACCESS during first grade.
- Accommodations for the Alternate ACCESS field test are the same as those available for the Alternate ACCESS.

- Because the Alternate ACCESS field test will not provide individual student results, there is no requirement that this assessment be added to a student’s IEP.

The Alternate ACCESS field test is an important part of WIDA’s work to update the Alternate ACCESS, which includes expanding the test to kindergarten and creating a new Alternate ACCESS screener. To support districts as they plan for administration of the Alternate ACCESS Field Test, MDE has developed a *Frequently Asked Questions About the Alternate ACCESS Field Test* resource, which can be found on the [District Resources](#) page of the MDE website (under the District Assessment Coordinator Resources expandable heading). Additional information on the field test from WIDA can be found on the [Alternate ACCESS for ELLs Field Test webpage](#).

Alternate ACCESS Field Test Transcription Guidance

The *Alternate ACCESS for ELLs Field Test – Test Administrator Manual* has been updated to provide clarity around transcription guidance for the Speaking and Writing domains and the number of required test administrators. During the Alternate ACCESS field test, WIDA will be gathering written transcriptions of student responses for the Speaking and Writing domains. These transcriptions will be used by WIDA to make improvements to scoring processes and procedures. Since the Alternate ACCESS is already scored locally by the test administrator and not by DRC, two individuals do not need to be present for the transcription process.

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Initial Shipment of MCA and MTAS Test Materials

The initial quantities of paper test materials for MCA and MTAS are based on information entered in Pretest Editing by Jan. 20. The shipment of these test materials will arrive at the district office or schools on either Feb. 21–23 or Feb. 28–March 2, depending on the shipping location and dates selected in Test WES. If no changes were indicated in Test WES, the default option was “ship to district” with a delivery window of Feb. 21–23.

It is important that districts have staff available to receive the materials. District and School Assessment Coordinators must ensure there is a plan for receiving the shipments and keeping the test materials secure upon delivery following the district’s procedure.

Districts can track the status of the shipment in PearsonAccess Next 2–3 days prior to the arrival date. For more information, refer to *Viewing Test Material Reports and Tracking Information* guide posted on the [User Guides](#) page of the PearsonAccess Next website.

Receiving and Inventorying Test Materials

MCA paper test materials and MTAS test materials will be boxed separately and have different packing lists and security checklists. Use these materials to inventory all materials received; electronic copies of each school’s security checklists are also available on PearsonAccess Next. For more information, refer to the *Receiving Secure Test Materials* guide posted on the [User Guides](#) page of the PearsonAccess Next website. A copy is also included in the test materials shipment.

The security of the test materials must be maintained when inventorying and organizing, and all secure test materials must be kept in a secure, locked location until testing. The *Handling Secure Paper Test Materials* training is an optional training for staff who will handle paper test materials for any statewide assessments, and it provides information about keeping materials secure and maintaining the chain of custody. This training is available in the [Training Management System \(TMS\)](#) on the Other Trainings tab, under the District-Assigned Trainings category.

Preparing for the MTAS

To allow sufficient time to prepare for test administration, District and School Assessment Coordinators should distribute MTAS test materials to Test Administrators upon delivery. These materials must be kept in a secure location until testing begins. However, once test materials are delivered, you may review and prepare all MTAS materials that may be used during test administration including:

- Reviewing all scripted tasks and passages in the Task Administration Manual, Presentation Pages, Passages and/or Phenomena Book, and Response Option Cards. **New for 2022-23:** The separate Passages and/or Phenomena Book is a spiral-bound book by grade and contains the reading passages and science phenomena for the field test tasks. This new material is used in conjunction with the Presentation Pages so the student can view both the reading passage or science phenomenon and associated item together.
- Preparing and making adaptations (such as enlarging materials or incorporating texture) to Presentation Pages, Passages and/or Phenomena Book, and Response Option Cards to individual student needs.
- Determining any objects or manipulatives that may be needed for the presentation of the task to the student. Refer to the printed *Task Administration Manuals* for optional mathematics and science object lists.

Placing Additional Orders in PearsonAccess Next

The window for placing additional orders in PearsonAccess Next for MCA paper test materials and MTAS test materials opens on Feb. 21. Additional test materials can be ordered until noon on the Tuesday before the last day of the testing windows to ensure there is enough time for districts to receive the requested materials. Additional orders may be placed for any of the following reasons:

- Students have newly enrolled or there were changes in accommodations/linguistic supports or test assignments after Jan. 20.
- The district decided not to receive MTAS test materials in the initial test materials shipment (a decision made during Pretest Editing).

For step-by-step instructions on placing an additional order, refer to *Ordering Additional Test Materials* guide, posted on the [User Guides](#) page of the PearsonAccess Next website. For any questions about placing additional orders, contact the Pearson help desk at 888-817-8659 or [submit a Pearson help desk request online](#).

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PearsonAccess Next Setup and Preparation

Starting Feb. 20, districts will be able to set up test sessions, assign MTAS Entry users, and create reporting groups in PearsonAccess Next. Various user guides, including the *MCA Online Testing User Guide*, *MCA Data Entry User Guide*, and *MTAS Data Entry User Guide*, are available on the [User Guides](#) page of the PearsonAccess Next website.

Setting up MCA Test Sessions

Step-by-step instructions for setting up test sessions are available in the *MCA Online Testing User Guide*. Test sessions cannot be started prior to the first day of the testing window, and it is recommended that test sessions are not started until the actual day of test administration. The *MCA Data Entry User Guide* and *MTAS Data Entry User Guide* provide information and instructions for test preparation and guidance for data entry for students taking a paper MCA or MTAS.

Assign MTAS Entry users

District Assessment Coordinators (DACs) and Assessment Administrators (AAs) user roles must assign students with MTAS test assignments to staff with the MTAS Entry user role in PearsonAccess Next before those users can enter MTAS data in PearsonAccess Next. For step-by-step instructions on assigning MTAS Entry users in PearsonAccess Next, refer to *MTAS Data Entry User Guide*.

Additional Training

The following trainings will be available in the [Training Management System \(TMS\)](#) on Feb. 24 on the Other Trainings tab under the District-Assigned Trainings category.

- *Managing MCA Test Sessions in PearsonAccess Next* is an optional training for staff who manage MCA test sessions in PearsonAccess Next; it provides information about using the system before and during testing.
- *Entering MTAS Data in PearsonAccess Next* is an optional training for staff who enter the Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI) data and MTAS scores/responses in PearsonAccess Next.

Reporting Groups

DACs and AAs can create reporting groups in PearsonAccess Next for staff to access student results, including On-Demand Reports and Historical Student Data. There are three options for creating reporting groups — manually, importing a file, or creating a reporting group from a test session. For more information, refer to the *Reporting Groups User Guide*, posted on the [Additional Reporting Resources](#) page of the PearsonAccess Next website or the *Reporting Groups in PearsonAccess Next* short video training in the [TMS](#) on the Data and Reporting tab in the Pearson Data and Reporting Trainings category. Note: This training was created for the 2021–22 test administration but still contains accurate information for the 2022–23 test administration.

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PearsonAccess Next and TestNav Changes for 2023 MCA and MTAS Test Administrations

The following changes have been made in PearsonAccess Next and TestNav in preparation for the 2023 MCA and MTAS test administrations:

PearsonAccess Next

- **User Management:** User accounts are now disabled after 365 days of inactivity and deleted after 550 days of inactivity. User accounts can now be deleted or restored using the user export/import file.
- **Global:** When selections are made in PearsonAccess Next and the user navigates to a separate task, these selections appear in a panel on the left. These selections now include an “x” for users to remove a selection, as needed, without exiting the task.
- **Preferred Name:** A student’s preferred first, middle, and last name are shown under Student Enrollment Data. For MCA only, the preferred first name is included on the Students in Session page, on the testing ticket and student session roster, and within TestNav.
- **Student Details:** When viewing session information under student details, a user can select the session hyperlink and then Go to Students in Sessions to go directly to the test session. Also, a user can select Print Student Testing Tickets to print all testing tickets for that student.
- **Dashboards:** Dashboard will now automatically refresh every 10 minutes. All dashboards include drilldown capabilities which allow users to go directly to the applicable pages within PearsonAccess Next.
- **Student Test and Item Progress:** Reading and Mathematics MCA adaptive tests now show the percentage of items completed, as well as the number of items answered, visited, and remaining.
- **Student Test Status Dashboard:** The student test status dashboard is now available for sessions with 100 or fewer students.
- **Reading MTAS:** Reading field test tasks were added to the *Data Collection* form and data entry screen in PearsonAccess Next.

TestNav

- Students can now navigate between different student directions pages as needed. For the Reading and Mathematics MCAs, once students navigate past the last directions page, they cannot go back to them. For the Science MCA, the student directions are embedded at the beginning of the first section of the test, so students can go back to them throughout the first section as needed.

- For the Reading and Mathematics MCA, the Welcome Screen no longer displays the number of sections in the test. For the Science MCA, the Welcome Screen displays the number of questions for each section.
- A progress indicator is located on the TestNav grey bar to indicate the student's completion progress as the student answers questions. For the Reading and Mathematics MCA, the progress bar indicator shows the student's progress for the entire test. For the Science MCA, the progress indicator shows the student's progress for each section and restarts at the beginning of each section.
- For the Science MCA, the End of Section/End of Test review screens list all questions in a stacked list under the Submit button for students to select and review. Questions bookmarked by the student include the bookmark icon.

For more information, refer to the *MCA Online Testing User Guide*, *MCA Data Entry User Guide*, and *MTAS Data Entry User Guide* on the [User Guides](#) page on the PearsonAccess Next website. Also, refer to the Pearson DAC Test Administration Training and TestNav and Item Samplers: For New DACs and Educators (1-2 Years) training for new DACs, which will be available Friday, Feb. 17 on the [Training Management System \(TMS\)](#) (on the District Assessment Coordinator tab under Pearson Recorded Webinars).

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After Hours Testing

To provide districts and schools the most flexibility for scheduling (for students who are homebound or attending an online program), District Assessment Coordinators (DACs) may request testing times outside of regular school hours or on weekends. As noted in Chapter 8 of the [Procedures Manual](#), the DAC must email mde.testing@state.mn.us at least two business days in advance and provide the following information:

- The district and school name
- Grade and subject/domain
- Name of test session(s)
- Planned dates and times to begin and end testing
- Rationale for after-hours testing or data entry need

Note: Service provider help desks have set customer service hours and may not be available during after hours testing sessions.

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MTAS Administration 2023 Informational Meeting – Recording and Reading Sample Tasks Now Available

The Academic Standards, Instruction, and Assessment Division hosted informational meetings in January for MTAS Test Administrators and special education staff to share upcoming changes to the MTAS in the spring of 2023. While this information is also included in the required training materials for MTAS administration, the informational meetings highlighted some of the MTAS test administration changes and showed a sample of new reading and science field test tasks that are included in a portion of the assessment. Test Administrators and other district staff involved in administering the MTAS are encouraged to view the recording of this meeting to prepare for the changes, become familiar with the new reading and science tasks. **Note: This recorded meeting does not replace the required MTAS Test Administrator trainings that will be available on the Training Management System (TMS).** The recording and links to new reading sample tasks are now available on the [Alternate Assessments](#) page of the Testing 1, 2, 3 website.

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Odds & Ends

MDE will be closed on Monday, Feb. 20, in observance of Presidents Day.

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ACADEMIC STANDARDS, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT

Minnesota Department of Education

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

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