

AN UPDATE FROM STATEWIDE STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND DATA ANALYTICS—MARCH 3, 2021

QUICK LINKS	IMPORTANT DATES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New DAC Q&A Webinar Registration • Employment Opportunity at Minnesota Department Of Education • Student Data Privacy Reminder • Students in Special Circumstances • Pearson Help Desk Online Submission Response • Test Security Notification and Test Administration Report • Verifying Student Information for MCA/MTAS • Monitoring MCA Test Sessions in the Student Test Status Dashboard • Grades 4–5 Online ACCESS Common Misadministration • ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS Irregularities • MCA/MTAS Reminders • Tech Update 	<p>Jan. 25–April 16: ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS testing window</p> <p>March 2–3: Districts receive MCA and MTAS test materials based on District Options selections in Test WES</p> <p>March 5: Deadline for districts to submit their Assurance, Rationale, and Context (ARC) response to MDE</p> <p>March 8: MCA and MTAS testing window opens</p>

New DAC Q&A Webinar Registration

The New DAC March Q&A webinar will be held on March 16, from 2–3 p.m. [Register for the New DAC Q&A Webinar](#). Details for joining the webinar will be provided once participants register.

For the March webinar, there are no prerequisite readings or trainings to review. MDE will answer any questions related to test administration. Experienced DACs are also welcome to attend. [Submit your questions for the March webinar](#).

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Employment Opportunity at Minnesota Department of Education

The MDE's Division of Statewide Student Assessment and Data Analytics has an opening in the area of alternate assessment. This position exists to provide direction, leadership, coordination, consultation and service to school districts and MDE. This position will serve as a state expert and primary resource for K-12 alternate assessments for students with significant cognitive disabilities and will facilitate the assessment, accommodations and implementation of state academic standards in reading, math, and science for students with disabilities.

- Title: [Alternate Assessment Specialist](#)
- Application period: March 2–23
- You may also view this posting at the [Minnesota Careers website](#). Search for Job ID 44175.

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Student Data Privacy Reminder

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 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.

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Students in Special Circumstances

For students in special circumstances, such as in care and treatment facilities, dual-enrolled students, or students moving into or out of district during testing, refer to Chapter 9 of the [Procedures Manual](#), which provides definitions and clarity for student participation in the statewide assessments.

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Pearson Help Desk Online Submission Response

When an online [Pearson Help Desk request](#) is submitted, an auto-generated email is initially sent back to the email address entered. If you do not see this initial email in your inbox, or follow-up email from the Pearson Help Desk, check your spam/junk folder. If emails from Pearson's Help Desk are delivered to your spam/junk folder, your District IT will need to allow emails from customersupport@pearson.com through your spam or email security settings.

Test Security Notification and Test Administration Report

For all statewide testing administrations (MCA/MTAS and ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS), Test Security Notifications (TSNs) and Test Administration Reports (TARs) are methods of documenting certain occurrences during testing. Detailed information starts on page 109 of the [Procedures Manual](#).

Test Security Notification (TSN)

The TSN is used for reporting security violations related to statewide assessments; it must be submitted online in Test WES by the DAC. Security violations involve actions that jeopardize the integrity of test results and/or give an unfair advantage to a student or group of students, including, but not limited to, leaving test materials unsecured, discussing secure test items with staff or students, distributing secure test content via email or social media, and reviewing or changing student responses.

When a security violation occurs, the School Assessment Coordinator should immediately contact their DAC, who will contact Virginie Sanchez at 651-582-8674 or mde.testing@state.mn.us, no later than 24 hours after the violation occurs. Virginie will advise on submitting the TSN. The notification should be submitted in Test WES as soon as possible, even if investigation into the incident is still taking place. Additional documentation can be submitted at a later time. More information about how to submit a TSN is available in the [Submitting Test Security Notifications in Test WES](#) help document.

MDE may also request that a TSN be submitted for tracking data violations, such as a data privacy issue related to testing (e.g., leaving student results unsecured) or not abiding by the embargo for preliminary or final assessment results.

Test Administration Report (TAR)

The TAR is used to record the occurrence of a special circumstance (e.g., the district uses a sign language interpreter or translator for test directions), misadministrations (e.g., a student is administered the incorrect test or accommodation), and reasons for invalidations. In addition, the information documented on TARs can assist with questions from district staff and parents regarding special circumstances or misadministrations when student results are available.

Note: Districts and schools are not required to keep documentation regarding why an EXC test code is applied for each student. If it is helpful for documenting specific circumstances for a specific student and/or a school-level decision as to why an EXC test code is applied for each student, districts and schools may use the TAR.

A copy of the TAR is available on page 238 of the *Procedures Manual*, but districts may use their own template for collecting the information required on a TAR (e.g., electronically).

Verifying Student Information for MCA/MTAS

Test Eligibility for MCA/MTAS

Students must be loaded for the correct tests in PearsonAccess Next before they can be added to test sessions or assigned for MTAS data entry. Information for all students enrolled in a district or school is sent nightly to Pearson in precode files throughout the testing windows.

If a student's test eligibility does not appear in PearsonAccess Next, first verify the student's information in Test WES under Precode Student Eligibility. Enter the student's MARSS/SSID number to check on the following possibilities:

- If blank demographic fields appear when you enter the MARSS/SSID number, either there is an issue with the student record in MARSS, or the student has not been submitted in MARSS. Work with your MARSS Coordinator to correct any issues and resubmit MARSS data.
- The student record is being sent in precode for another district or school. The first column appearing in the Precode Eligibility table (at the bottom of the screen) is the district/school where the student record is being sent in precode. If the student is dual-enrolled, verify which district or school will be testing the student and manually change the school where the student will be testing, as needed, by selecting "Add" on the student's information.
- The student record has not yet been sent in precode to Pearson. If a student was recently submitted in MARSS, or if a change in Precode Student Eligibility was made recently, the record may not have been sent to Pearson yet. When changes are made through a MARSS update, the student information and test eligibility is typically available in PearsonAccess Next two business days after MARSS is submitted.

More information is included in the [Test WES Precode User Guide](#).

Accommodations and Linguistic Supports for MCA

Districts can continue to make changes to accommodations and linguistic supports for MCA in Test WES throughout the testing window. Additional test materials can be ordered in PearsonAccess Next as needed. Refer to the [Ordering Additional Test Materials](#) resource for more information.

Districts must ensure accommodations/linguistic support codes affecting the tests students take online are indicated at least one business day prior to the student testing, including word-to-word pop-up translation codes for Mathematics and Science MCA (HM, SO, SP).

Students can only be added to a session if they are eligible for the test assigned:

- Only students with the script for Science MCA accommodation code (MS) will be eligible for Science Script test sessions.

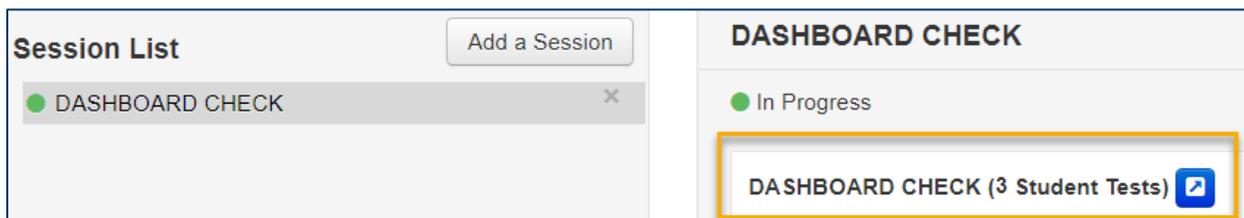
- Only students with an accommodation code requiring data entry (e.g., 18, BR, HC) will be eligible for Data Entry test sessions.
- All other students, including those students requiring accommodated text-to-speech or word-to-word pop-up translations will be eligible for a regular test session (e.g., Grade 07 Mathematics MCA).

Full details, including how to verify that the applicable codes appear in PearsonAccess Next, are included in the [MCA Online Testing User Guide](#).

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Monitoring MCA Test Sessions in the Student Test Status Dashboard

New for 2020–21: For the Reading, Mathematics, and Science MCAs, users can monitor test sessions using the Student Test Status Dashboard in PearsonAccess Next. In the single session view, a pop-out button will display to the right of the session name if a session has 50 students or less. Once the button is selected, the dashboard will open in a new tab within the browser. Once opened, all student tests within that session will be displayed. The [MCA Online Testing User Guide](#) includes detailed information on what is displayed on this tab.



One part of the Student Test Status Dashboard is the Test Progress bar graph, showing the percentage of items answered, where no response is required, visited, and remaining. It also includes a chart showing the number of items for each of those categories. The following table describes differences for how student test progress is displayed on the Dashboard for adaptive tests (Reading and Mathematics MCA) and fixed-form tests (Science MCA) for answered items and items not requiring a response.

Test	Answered (green)	No response required (blue)
Online Reading and Mathematics MCAs (Adaptive)	<p>While students are in the student directions section, this field includes the number of student directions pages that have been viewed.</p> <p>Once students navigate past the student directions, this field includes only items that require a response. The total number reflects the total number of items on the test.</p>	<p>While students are in the student directions section, this field includes the number of student directions pages that have not yet been viewed.</p> <p>Once students navigate past the student directions, this will appear as n/a.</p>
Online Science MCA (Fixed Form)	<p>This field includes both items that have been answered, as well as student directions pages, title pages and review screens that have been viewed. As a result, the total number will be higher than the number of items on the test once the student has answered all items.</p>	<p>This field includes student directions pages, title pages and review screens that have not yet been viewed.</p>

For all subjects, the Visited and Remaining columns display the same information:

- Visited (yellow): While testing, this field always appear as a 0. After students exit the test, this field will appear as either 0 or 1 as students must answer each item in order to continue.
- Remaining (red): This field is the number of items remaining that require a response.

Example: Reading and Mathematics MCAs

DASHBOARD CHECK ● In Progress **Grade 05 Reading MCA**

All Test Statuses Total Students: 3 Refresh

Test Source: TN APP

■ - Answered
 ■ - No Response Required
 ■ - Visited
 ■ - Remaining

Student Name	Test Status	Test Duration	Battery	Test Progress				
Lemon, Control (5555095010023) i	Exited	00:03:19		<table style="width: 100%; text-align: center; font-size: small;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">7</td> <td style="width: 25%;">n/a</td> <td style="width: 25%;">1</td> <td style="width: 25%;">42</td> </tr> </table>	7	n/a	1	42
7	n/a	1	42					
Lime, Control (5555095010024) i	Exited	00:00:17		<table style="width: 100%; text-align: center; font-size: small;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">1</td> <td style="width: 25%;">9</td> <td style="width: 25%;">1</td> <td style="width: 25%;">0</td> </tr> </table>	1	9	1	0
1	9	1	0					
Melon, Control (5555095010025) i	Exited	00:03:45		<table style="width: 100%; text-align: center; font-size: small;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">24</td> <td style="width: 25%;">n/a</td> <td style="width: 25%;">0</td> <td style="width: 25%;">26</td> </tr> </table>	24	n/a	0	26
24	n/a	0	26					

Note: The second student is still in the Student Directions section of their test. Once they navigate past this section, the student test progress will appear like the other students.

Example: Science MCA

DASHBOARD CHECK ● In Progress **Grade 05 Science MCA**

All Test Statuses Total Students: 3 Refresh

Test Source: TN APP

■ - Answered
 ■ - No Response Required
 ■ - Visited
 ■ - Remaining

Student Name	Test Status	Test Duration	Battery	Test Progress				
Lemon, Control (5555095010023) ⓘ	Exited	00:04:23		<table style="border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">22</td> <td style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">10</td> <td style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">43</td> </tr> </table>	22	10	1	43
22	10	1	43					
Lime, Control (5555095010024) ⓘ	Exited	00:00:37		<table style="border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">8</td> <td style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">17</td> <td style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">0</td> <td style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">51</td> </tr> </table>	8	17	0	51
8	17	0	51					
Melon, Control (5555095010025) ⓘ	Exited	00:02:00		<table style="border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">24</td> <td style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">10</td> <td style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">0</td> <td style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">42</td> </tr> </table>	24	10	0	42
24	10	0	42					

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Grades 4–5 Online ACCESS Common Misadministration

MDE has noticed a common misadministration across the state for grades 4–5 ACCESS Writing domains, with students not being provided their Writing Response Booklet. Consider reminding your Test Administrators to be diligent in order to prevent these situations.

- Grades 4–5 Writing domains are typically completed in handwriting (HW) sessions. Students view the writing prompt online and provide a hand-written response in the Writing Response Booklet.
- DRC sent Writing Response Booklets based on the number of online testers the district indicated by Dec. 16 for that grade cluster. Additional Writing Response Booklets can be ordered in WIDA AMS.
- If students in grades 4–5 are competent at typing and wish to respond online, districts must remove the students from the handwriting (HW) session and then move them into a keyboarding test session.
- Verify that students are assigned to the session in WIDA AMS that aligns with their response mode.

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ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS Irregularities

The *ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS Irregularities* is available on the [WIDA Minnesota](#) page under the Resources and Requirements heading within the Manuals, Guides and Test Materials expandable tab. This document outlines some situations or misadministrations that may occur during ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS testing and require action by the district, MDE, or DRC. While not an exhaustive list, examples of possible test administration situations or misadministrations, and the likely outcomes are included for reference.

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MCA/MTAS Reminders

MCA/MTAS Irregularities

The *MCA/MTAS Irregularities* is available on the [Policies and Procedures](#) page of PearsonAccess Next. This document outlines some situations or misadministrations that may occur during MCA and MTAS testing and require action by the district, MDE, or Pearson. While not an exhaustive list, this document describes many situations that arise during testing and may help the district know the proper course of action. DACs should always use the current-year version posted to PearsonAccess Next when considering next steps as this document is reviewed and updated annually. In most cases, the DAC will contact Pearson and provide detailed information about the issue.

Note: When contacting the Pearson help desk for irregularities, DACs should indicate that they have an irregularity and need to speak with the Minnesota Program Team. This will ensure the DAC's request is escalated to someone who can help resolve the situation. Detailed information is provided at the beginning of the document.

MCA Testing Directions

Test Monitors are required to use testing directions to ensure test administrations are standardized across the state as much as possible. There are two versions of the [MCA Testing Directions](#) depending on how the test is being administered: *Testing Directions: Online* and *Testing Directions: Paper*. It is imperative that Test Monitors are familiar with the relevant testing directions and that they use them during testing.

Two sections of the *Testing Directions* must be provided to Test Monitors and used for every test administration: *Script to Read to Students* and *Answering Questions and Providing Assistance*. These sections must be supplied in their entirety and cannot be modified (i.e., portions of the script removed). Districts and schools may work with Test Monitors prior to testing to determine what will be said for the fields that districts fill in (e.g., how testing is scheduled), and which other sections they will provide.

Districts and schools may also determine if they will allow Test Monitors to access the directions electronically during test sessions rather than using a printed copy. If accessed electronically, Test Monitors must follow MDE and district policies regarding device usage (e.g., not checking email or using the device for other work).

The scripted portion of the *Testing Directions* is available in Hmong, Somali, and Spanish on the MCA Testing Directions page. A *Health and Safety Guidance for Test Monitors* resource is also posted.

Note: Hard copies of the *Testing Directions: Online* are not available this year and cannot be ordered during the additional orders window.

Reminder: Preparing and Starting Online Science MCA Test Sessions

For this year, due to the fixed forms used for the online Science MCA, it is strongly recommended that districts wait to Prepare and Start test sessions in PearsonAccess Next until 2–3 days prior to the scheduled start of

testing. When test sessions are prepared, it connects the student in PearsonAccess Next with a test form in TestNav. This does not apply for science script and science data entry or online Reading and Mathematics MCA.

MCA Testing Tip: Restarting iPads

Pearson recommends restarting or resetting iPad devices used for testing at the end of each day. As students test on iPads, memory fills up and some TestNav tools, including highlighting, may not work consistently. Refer to the [Tech Update](#) below for additional details.

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Tech Update

iPad Memory Restart for MCA

Pearson recommends restarting or resetting iPad devices used for testing at the end of each day. As students test on iPads, memory fills up and some TestNav tools, including highlighting, may not work consistently. Performing a soft restart or resetting the iPad are the recommended troubleshooting methods for deleting temporary files and closing background processes to free up internal memory.

- Soft restart the iPad:
 - Press and hold the Power button until the red slider appears.
 - Drag the slider to turn your device completely off.
 - After the device turns off, press and hold the Power button again until you see the Apple logo.
- Force reset the iPad:
 - From the home screen, press and hold the Power button and the Home key simultaneously until the Apple logo appears.
 - Release the Power button and the Home key when the Apple logo appears.
 - iPad restarts.

Note: If you have an iPad without a Home button, such as the 2018 iPad Pro, complete the following:

- Press and quickly release the Volume Up button.
- Press and quickly release the Volume Down button.
- Press and hold the Power button until the device restarts.

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Minnesota Department of Education

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

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