

AN UPDATE FROM ACADEMIC STANDARDS, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT—MARCH 30, 2022

QUICK LINKS	IMPORTANT DATES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS Shipping Deadline</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Cell Phone and Device Policy</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Student Data Privacy Reminder</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Testing Situations or Misadministrations</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Proctor Cache Recommendations for MCA Online Testing</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Manually Adding Students in Test WES</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Invitation to Minnesota Special Education Teachers</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">MDE Employment Opportunity: SLEDS and MSS Coordinator</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Upcoming Opportunities</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Tech Update</a></li> </ul>	<p><b>April 1:</b> <i>Deadline to ship paper ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS test materials back to DRC</i></p> <p><b>Feb. 22–May 3 (noon):</b> <i>Reading and Mathematics MCA, and Reading, Mathematics, and Science MTAS additional test materials ordering window</i></p> <p><b>Feb. 22–May 10 (noon):</b> <i>Science MCA additional test materials ordering window</i></p> <p><b>March 7–May 6:</b> <i>Reading and Mathematics MCA, and Reading, Mathematics, and Science MTAS testing window</i></p> <p><b>March 7–May 13:</b> <i>Science MCA testing window</i></p>

## ***ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS Shipping Deadline***

**The deadline for shipping all ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS test materials back to DRC is this Friday, April 1.**

You must contact UPS at 866-857-1501 at least one day before you want a pickup scheduled. Scheduling pickup for the same day will result in UPS asking the school to pay an additional charge. Refer to the Returning Test Materials and Shipping Materials sections (pages 25–27) of the [ACCESS for ELLs District and School Test Coordinator Manual](#) for instructions on returning materials.

Note: Online grades 4–12 *Test Administrator Scripts, Test Administrator Manuals, and District and School Test Coordinator Manuals* are considered non-secure test materials and do not need to be returned. They can be recycled.

## Preparing Materials for Shipping

Confirm that every test booklet that contains student responses has a Pre-ID or District/School label in the upper right corner of the front cover. **Any test booklet that does not have a label with a barcode in the correct place will not be processed, and the student will not receive a score.**

If using a District/School label, the following new booklets and bubble in the following information with a number 2 pencil:

- Last Name
- First Name
- Middle Initial
- District Name
- School Name
- State Name Abbreviation
- Birth Date (MM/DD/YYYY)
- Grade Level
- Gender
- State Student ID Number (MARSS number)
- District Student ID Number (MARSS local use number, if used in the district)

The Date of Testing field is optional; the date the test was completed for the student may be indicated in situations where the student has left the district and did not complete all four domains.

## Implications of Returning Materials Late

If districts return materials after April 1, DRC will process them as a late return. **Paper tests will not be scored before data is provided to MDE**, and the following would be unavailable or incomplete for any domain taken on paper (e.g., writing booklets for students in grade 1–5 and all domains in Kindergarten):

- Early student-level results (used by EL teams to make decisions about instruction or placement)
- Assessment records for Posttest Editing in Test WES
- Embargoed and final release of data
- Individual Student Reports (ISRs)
- All accountability calculations

- Score appeal, transcription request or test booklet search

[Back to Top](#)

## ***Cell Phone and Device Policy***

For all statewide test administrations, students may **not** use or access cell phones, wearable technology, or other devices at any time during testing, including during breaks or when testing is completed. District and School Assessment Coordinators must develop and train staff on school-specific policies and procedures prior to test administration. The full policy is included in Chapter 8 of the [Procedures Manual](#), starting on page 177.

Note: Use of a device is allowed if it is used as a medical monitor, as long as the use is officially documented by a medical professional. The Test Monitor must ensure the device is not accessed for other purposes.

[Back to Top](#)

## ***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 or other identifiable information 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.

[Back to Top](#)

## ***Testing Situations or Misadministrations***

MDE provides districts a resource called [MCA/MTAS Irregularities](#), which outlines some situations and misadministrations that may occur during testing and require additional action. In most cases, the DAC will contact the Pearson help desk and provide detailed information about the issue. While not an exhaustive list, this document describes many situations that arise during testing and may help the district know the proper action to take.

[Back to Top](#)

## ***Proctor Cache Recommendations for MCA Online Testing***

Refer to the [Tech Update](#) section below for important information on proctor cache recommendations.

[Back to Top](#)

## ***Manually Adding Students in Test WES***

In general, Precode Student Eligibility should not be used in place of a MARSS submission to add students for testing. This is because if a student record is manually added or changed in Test WES, then that student information will be used instead of MARSS. Any additional updates in MARSS, like a change in grade or school, will no longer be automatically sent in precode for that student.

However, there may be cases where a record needs to be manually added or changed (e.g., when MARSS will not be submitted before testing or a student needs to test the next day, to add a home-schooled student). Ensure any student information manually added or changed matches MARSS, and consider manual changes as a workaround for adding students for testing and not a routine practice. Detailed instructions on how to add a student manually to precode records are available in the [2021–22 Test WES Precode User Guide](#), starting on page 12.

Any records you manually add or change in Test WES affect only how a student is sent in precode for testing. It does not edit or change district MARSS data.

Note: In order for students to be loaded in PearsonAccess Next for online testing or data entry, any MARSS enrollment updates must be submitted at least two business days in advance. Once MARSS is submitted to MDE, that data is gathered overnight and is available the next business day in Test WES for districts to make edits in Precode Student Eligibility (e.g., changing schools) or Pretest Editing (e.g., test assignments or accommodations/linguistic supports) before it is sent to Pearson.

[Back to Top](#)

## ***Invitation to Minnesota Special Education Teachers***

Please share the following information with Special Education teachers and educators.

MDE invites Special Education teachers and educators to register in MDE's database to be part of ongoing efforts to redesign and review new tasks within the redesigned alternate assessment, the Alternate MCA. This summer, the work is focused on reading and science for the Alternate MCA development. Committee members will review phenomena and questions written to the 2019 Minnesota Science Standards for science and passages and questions written to the 2020 English Language Arts Standards for reading.

We hope that summer committee participants will engage in creative thinking, gain a better understanding of the new extended benchmarks, and build a repository of engaging phenomena, reading passages, and items for the Science and Reading Alternate MCA.

Committees meet for two days in the summer and participants receive Continuing Education Units (CEUs) and an honorarium. Special Education teachers can express their interest in being a participant this summer or in future Alternate MCA review committees [by entering their contact information online](#).

[Back to Top](#)

## ***MDE Employment Opportunity: SLEDS and MSS Coordinator***

The Data Practices and Analytics division is currently seeking a coordinator for the Statewide Longitudinal Education Data System (SLEDS) and the Minnesota Student Survey (MSS).

If you are interested (or know someone who may be interested) in a new and challenging opportunity, consult the position description and application instructions on the [State of Minnesota Careers](#) website and apply by Apr. 7. The Job ID is 54008

[Back to Top](#)

## ***Upcoming Opportunities***

### **COMPASS Webinars**

The COMPASS Math team is partnering with [Quantile® Teacher Assistant](#) to provide three free webinars for Minnesota educators. The webinars will demonstrate how to use the Quantile program alongside current mathematics curriculums and how other resources can be connected. Each webinar will have the same content modified with examples for specific grade bands. [Registration for the upcoming COMPASS webinars is required.](#)

- Tuesday, April 5, at 3:45 p.m. (Grades 9–12 examples)

### **Invitation to Minnesota Science Teachers**

Please share the following information with Science teachers and educators.

MDE invites Science teachers and educators to apply to be part of Building Capacity for Science Assessment: Science MCA-IV Item Writing Workshop in the summer of 2022. The workshop will be 4 1/2 days total, starting with a half-day virtual training on June 24, and followed by virtual meetings on July 11–12 and Aug. 1–2. Approximately 15–20 additional hours may be needed outside of these dates to complete the writing assignments. This summer, the work is focused on writing engaging grade-level phenomena tied to the 2019 Minnesota Science Standards along with generating questions for each phenomenon. MDE hopes that the summer 2022 workshop goals generate creative thinking, engage participants with unique teaching approaches, and build a repository of engaging phenomena for the Science MCA-IV.

Science teachers and educators interested in being part of this year's MCA-IV item writer workshop can express their interest [by entering their contact information online](#) by April 22. Selected writers will receive Continuing Education Units (CEUs) and compensation for participation in these workshop dates and some independent work to complete two phenomenon-based scenarios with seven questions each. For more information, contact Jim Wood ([Jim.Wood@state.mn.us](mailto:Jim.Wood@state.mn.us)) or Judi Iverson ([Judi.Iverson@state.mn.us](mailto:Judi.Iverson@state.mn.us)), MDE Science Assessment Specialists.

MDE encourages any teachers and educators interested in becoming a Science item writer to apply. MDE wants to grow the impact teachers have on our Science MCA-IV assessment and looks forward to engaging with more

teachers around the state. Please share this information with colleagues who might be interested in participating.

[Back to Top](#)

## ***Tech Update***

### **Proctor Cache Recommendations for MCA Online Testing**

MDE and Pearson no longer recommend proctor caching for online MCA testing. Online testing requires a continuous connection between the student testing device and Pearson servers to send and receive test items, thus limiting the benefit of caching test content. Data from Spring 2021 testing showed item load time was nearly identical for cached and non-cached tests. In addition, continuous improvements to district and school technology infrastructures have decreased the need for proctor caching.

If you have used proctor caching in the past, have concerns about testing without proctor cache, or want to discuss testing without proctor cache for Spring 2022, please schedule a [Technology Office Hours](#) virtual session to speak with a Pearson Field Engineering Specialist. The [Infrastructure Readiness Checklist](#) includes steps for preparing for online testing without proctor cache. All steps for using proctor cache have been moved to Appendix A of the checklist for reference if your district will continue to use proctor caching.

[Back to Top](#)

---

ACADEMIC STANDARDS, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT

Minnesota Department of Education

[education.mn.gov](http://education.mn.gov) > Districts, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Statewide Testing

If you have any questions or want to unsubscribe, please send an email to [mde.testing@state.mn.us](mailto:mde.testing@state.mn.us).