

AN UPDATE FROM STATEWIDE STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND DATA ANALYTICS—APRIL 14, 2021

QUICK LINKS	IMPORTANT DATES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS Reminders</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">2020–21 Minnesota Assessments Guidance during COVID-19 Reminder</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Changes in 2020–21 Reporting Timelines</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">EXC Test Codes</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">MCA/MTAS Reminders</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Verifying and Manually Adding Students in Test WES</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Minnesota Report Card Update</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Updated DAC Webinar and Training Information</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Upcoming Opportunities</a></li> </ul>	<p><b>April 16:</b> Testing window closes for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS</p> <p><b>April 23:</b> Deadline to ship ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS materials back to DRC.</p> <p><b>May 21:</b> Testing window closes for MCA and MTAS</p> <p><b>May 21:</b> Deadline to confirm in Test WES that all staff have completed required trainings and all students taking MTAS are eligible</p> <p><b>May 24:</b> Deadline to ship MCA and MTAS secure materials back to Pearson</p> <p><b>June 7:</b> Early student-level results for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS available in Test WES</p> <p><b>June 7–June 25:</b> Posttest Editing in Test WES</p>

## ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS Reminders

### Testing Window and Return of Secure Materials

The last day of the ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS testing window is **this Friday, April 16**. All tests must be completed by this date.

The deadline for shipping all ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS paper test materials back to DRC is Friday, April 23. You must contact UPS at 866-857-1501 the day before you want a pickup scheduled. Refer to the [After Testing](#)

[tutorial](#) or the *Returning Materials (After Testing)* section of the [District and School Test Coordinator Manual](#) for instructions on returning materials.

## Consequences of Late Returns for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS

It is critical that districts return paper materials by April 23 to ensure that all paper tests can be scanned and scored before data is provided to MDE. If the deadline is missed, the following are likely to be impacted:

- Assessment records for Posttest Editing in Test WES
- Early student-level results
- Embargoed and final release of data
- Individual Student Reports (ISRs)

The above items would be unavailable or incomplete (missing a composite score) for any result that has a paper component, including the following:

- All Kindergarten ACCESS testers
- All students in grades 1–3, since they take the Writing domain on paper
- Any students in grades 4–12 who took the Handwriting Session for the Writing domain
- All students who take the paper ACCESS
- All Alternate ACCESS testers

## Non-Secure Materials

To reduce shipping costs, the following materials can be recycled: *District and School Test Coordinator Manuals*, *Test Administrator Manuals*, *Grades 4–12 Online Test Administrator Scripts*, and school box range sheets. Any unused booklet labels must be securely disposed of because they contain student information.

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## 2020–21 Minnesota Assessments Guidance during COVID-19 Reminder

The *2020–21 Minnesota Assessments Guidance during COVID-19* is posted on the [Assessment Update](#) page of PearsonAccess Next. This document is meant to provide guidance for DACs specific to the administration of the Minnesota Assessments (ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS, and MCA/MTAS) during the COVID-19 pandemic, and 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.

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## Changes in 2020–21 Reporting Timelines

With extended testing windows and a later Posttest Editing window (June 7–25), reporting timelines for this year’s test results will also be later. While final timelines are still being determined, the District and School Student Results (DSR and SSR) and Test Results Summary reports will be provided later than the dates included on the *Important Dates* in the *Procedures Manual*. The dates for public reporting may also be later than originally published. Final dates will be provided as soon as they are available.

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## EXC Test Codes

For all assessments (except high school Science MCA and MTAS – see below), **no action** is needed during the testing window for students who will have the EXC-N test code applied because they are not testing due to extenuating circumstances related to COVID–19.

- Students are left in sessions in WIDA AMS for ACCESS, and no Do Not Score codes are indicated for any domain of ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS in WIDA AMS or on test booklets.
- Students are not added to test sessions or marked complete for MCA.
- Blank assessments are not submitted for MTAS.

During Posttest Editing, MDE will automatically apply the EXC-N test code to all students without a test record for all assessments.

### Exception for High School Science

The exception to the information above is for high school Science MCA and MTAS. Because MDE does not know which students enrolled in grades 9–12 would be taking the high school science assessment this year, EXC-N test codes cannot be automatically added in Posttest Editing based on enrollment alone. In order for MDE to indicate the EXC-N test code, the following steps must be taken during the testing window:

- Students who would have taken the High School Science MCA must be added to a test session in PearsonAccess Next and marked complete.
- Students who would have taken the High School Science MTAS must have a blank assessment submitted in PearsonAccess Next.

Instructions for adding these students to test sessions and submitting MTAS records are available in the *MCA Online Testing User Guide* and *MTAS Data Entry User Guide*, respectively. Both resources are posted on the [User Guides](#) page of PearsonAccess Next.

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# ***MCA/MTAS Reminders***

## **MCA/MTAS Irregularities**

The *MCA/MTAS Irregularities* document 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 Accommodation and Linguistic Support Reminders**

Districts can continue to make changes to accommodations and linguistic supports for MCA in Test WES throughout the testing window. Keep in mind that updates made in Test WES to accommodations will not trigger an additional order automatically; all additional orders must be placed in PearsonAccess Next in addition to indicating the applicable code in Test WES. 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](#).

## On-Demand Reports in PearsonAccess Next

On-Demand reports provide preliminary student scores for MCA and MTAS within 60 minutes after testing or data entry is completed. Results in on-demand reports can be generated as student detail reports (as PDFs) for individual students or downloaded in a list report (as a PDF or Excel spreadsheet). See the [On-Demand Reports and Export User Guide](#) for more detailed information.

Note: Districts determine whether to share on-demand reports with teachers, students, and/or families for instructional purposes.

- In order for users with the Test Monitor/Data Entry or MTAS Score Entry user roles to access On-Demand Reports in PearsonAccess Next, reporting groups must be set up for them. There are three options for creating reporting groups—manually, importing/exporting a file, or directly from a test session. For more information, refer to the [Reporting Groups User Guide](#).
- Preliminary student assessment results should not be discussed in public forums (e.g., on social media), reflected in public meeting minutes (e.g., school board meetings), or shared with the general public or media until the final assessment results have been released publicly. Chapter 11 of the [Procedures Manual](#) includes additional information about the use of these results in the *Preliminary Student-Level Results* section (pages 212–213) and *Abiding by the Embargo* section (pages 214–215).

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## Verifying and Manually Adding Students in Test WES

If students are not appearing in PearsonAccess Next for online testing or data entry, first verify the student's information in Test WES under Precode Student Eligibility. Enter the student's MARSS/SSID number to check for the following:

- If blank demographic fields appear after entering a student's MARSS/SSID number, there is an issue with the student's MARSS record. Work with your MARSS Coordinator to correct any issues and resubmit MARSS or enter the student's information for a manual add.
- Review the message in blue that appears above the table with the test eligibility information:
  - If the message states that the student record is being sent for another district but the student should be testing in your district, you can manually add the student to your district if needed.
  - If the message states that the student is no longer enrolled based on the MARSS Status End Date, work with your MARSS Coordinator to ensure the enrollment is correct in MARSS. You can manually add the student to your district if needed.
  - If the message states that the student record has NOT yet been sent to Pearson or you recently made a change on the Precode Search and Edit page, the record will be sent to Pearson in the next precode file and will typically be available the next business day. There is no need to manually add the student in these cases.

More information is in the [2020-21 Test WES Precode User Guide](#). Note: Nonpublic and home-schooled students must be added manually using Precode Student Eligibility in Test WES in order to be sent for testing. Dual-enrolled and concurrent-enrolled students may need to be added manually to the precode files for the school/district where they will take their test.

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## ***Minnesota Report Card Update***

The implementation of the foster care filter in the MCA/MTAS achievement panes of the Minnesota Report Card was delayed and is now available. When the foster care filter is selected in the achievement panes, no other filters can be selected to ensure student privacy protections. This includes race/ethnicity, gender, English learner, special education, free/reduced-priced meals, migrant status, active-duty parent, homeless, or limited or interrupted formal education (SLIFE) status.

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## ***Updated DAC Webinar and Training Information***

The [MDE District Assessment Coordinator Webinars and Trainings](#) document has been updated as follows:

- May New DAC Q&A Webinar: The prerequisites were updated for this webinar.
- MDE and DAC Coffee Hour and Sharing: This webinar was added in place of feedback sessions for this year as a place to share experiences and close out the year's administrations.
- Posttest Editing: This live webinar training session was added (previously planned to be a recording).
- New DAC Reporting Trainings: Two new trainings have been added in place of the June New DAC Q&A; the dates are still to be determined based on final reporting dates.

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## ***Upcoming Opportunities***

### **Teaching and Learning Led by Evidence: Session 8 Rescheduled**

Due to a registration error, MDE was unable to host this session as originally planned on March 25. We apologize for this inconvenience. This session has been rescheduled for Thursday, May 6. Registration is required using the WebEx link below, even if you were previously registered.

Participants can earn one continuing education unit (CEU) for each session by sending a request to [testing123@state.mn.us](mailto:testing123@state.mn.us) after attending the session.

- **Session 8:** *How should individual MCA scores be interpreted and used?*

- **Participants will gain:** An overview of the MCA and what it is designed to measure, a better understanding of individual student score interpretations, and guidance for using results to look at growth.
- **Presenters:** Yufeng Berry and Kendra Olsen
- **Date:** Thursday, May 6, 3–4 p.m.
- [Register for Session 8: How should individual MCA scores be interpreted and used?](#)

## Invitation to Minnesota Science Teachers

Please share this information with science teachers, and other educators interested in becoming a science item writer.

MDE invites Minnesota science teachers to apply for the *Building Capacity for Science Assessment: Science MCA-IV Item Writing Workshop*. This compensated workshop will be 4.5 days total, starting with a half-day virtual training on June 25, and followed by virtual meetings on July 12–13 and July 26–27. Approximately 15–20 additional hours may be needed outside of these dates to complete the writing assignments. This workshop is focused on writing engaging grade-level phenomena tied to the 2019 Minnesota Science Standards and also generating questions for each phenomenon. The workshop goals are to generate creative thinking, engage with teachers’ unique teaching approaches, and build a repository of engaging phenomena for the Science MCA-IV.

Interested science teachers can contact [Jim Wood](#) and [Judi Iverson](#), Science Assessment Specialists at MDE for more information, or [apply for the MCA-IV item writer workshop](#) by April 23. Writers will be chosen based on grade-level and content-area writing needs, as well as experience in developing assessments. Selected writers will be contacted the week of May 3–7.

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STATEWIDE STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND DATA ANALYTICS

Minnesota Department of Education

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