

AN UPDATE FROM ACADEMIC STANDARDS, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT— APRIL 26, 2023

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## ***Test Security Reminder***

Students may NOT use or access cell phones, wearable technology (such as smartwatches or Bluetooth earbuds), or any other devices at any time during a testing session, including during breaks and even if the student has exited or submitted the test. Cell phones or other devices must not be used in the testing room.

Districts must implement policies and procedures restricting student access to cell phones and other devices during test administration in order to maintain test security and prevent disruptions for other students. Examples of district procedures include collecting student phones and wearable technology, verifying phones are turned off, or requiring students to store phones and other devices so they are inaccessible during test administration.

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## ***Technical Bulletin – Confirm Managed Devices and Force Re-enrollment***

Refer to the [Tech Update](#) section below for information on how students are able to bypass security settings of an assigned managed ChromeOS by performing a series of complex processes.

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### ***Students Who Have Finished Testing***

Students who have finished testing in a previous test session are not allowed to be in the testing room on subsequent days of testing. MDE understands that these policies can lead to some scheduling and logistics challenges for districts, but these test security policies are consistent with those in states across the nation and come directly from recommendations by nationally recognized test security experts.

- Students who are not testing may cause a distraction for students who are still testing. As the number of students who have completed testing increases, students who are still testing may feel pressure to rush and finish their test, which is not conducive for a positive testing experience. In addition, it may be difficult for students who have finished testing previously to remain quiet throughout subsequent test sessions.
- Students who are in the testing room but not actively testing have additional access to test content that they would not if they were no longer in the testing room. This increases the risk for test security violations and invalidations due to cheating (for example, a student who is not testing sees test content and provides an answer to a student who is still testing) or device usage (for example, a student who is no longer testing may be more likely to access a prohibited device).

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### ***Data Entry for MCA and MTAS***

Districts must enter all student responses from Reading and Mathematics MCA paper test books and all MTAS scores in PearsonAccess Next **by 7 p.m. on Friday, May 5**. (The deadline to enter student responses from Science MCA test books is 7 p.m. on Friday, May 12.) Pearson does not scan any test books for student responses or scores. As the testing windows progress, ensure staff know the district or school procedure for data entry.

Only students with accommodations that require data entry will be eligible to be added to a MCA Data Entry test session. Only students assigned to MTAS will be available for MTAS Data Entry. Districts must enter accommodations or change test assignment from MCA to MTAS in Test WES at least one business day before attempting data entry. Refer to the *Test WES Pretest Editing User Guide* posted on the [Test WES](#) page of the

MDE website, and the *MCA Data Entry User Guide* and the *MTAS Data Entry User Guide* posted on the [User Guides](#) page of the PearsonAccess Next website for more information.

Note: While MCA test books are required to be returned to Pearson as they are secure materials, **MTAS Data Collection and Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI) Forms are not sent back to Pearson.**

**New for 2022–23:** The LCI and Data Collection Form are now perforated in the printed Task Administration Manual for ease of use during administration and to help ensure that these forms are removed before materials are returned to Pearson. Districts must keep them on file after entering scores online in case there are any questions about the scores/data entered. The retention duration is one year after the end of the academic school year in which testing took place.

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## ***Monitoring Testing Progress***

### **Operational Reports in PearsonAccess Next**

For MCA and MTAS, operational reports are available in PearsonAccess Next to help staff monitor testing progress. Information on specific operational reports, and tips on when to use the report, can be found in the *MCA Online Testing User Guide*, *MCA Data Entry User Guide*, and *MTAS Data Entry User Guide* posted on the [User Guides](#) page of the PearsonAccess Next website.

Note: If a student moves into your district from a different district and does not appear in PearsonAccess Next for you to add to a test session, view the *Student Tests Not Associated with the Student Organization* operational report in PearsonAccess Next (under Reports > Operational Reports in the Online Testing category).

### **Dashboards in PearsonAccess Next**

DAC and Assessment Administrator (AA) users have access to dashboard views in PearsonAccess Next (under Dashboards > Dashboards) to assist with verifying MCA test session and test status and MTAS test status. Refer to the View Dashboards section of the *MCA Online Testing User Guide*, *MCA Data Entry User Guide*, and *MTAS Data Entry User Guide*, posted on the [User Guides](#) page of the PearsonAccess Next website, for more information.

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## ***Confirmations in Test WES***

Districts use the District Confirmations page in Test WES to confirm the following statements; the deadline for checking the box next to these confirmations in Test WES is **next Friday, May 5.**

- All staff involved with statewide testing have completed required trainings prior to test administration, including the DAC.

- All students in the district being administered the MTAS and Alternate ACCESS will meet all eligibility requirements at the time of testing. **New for 2022–23:** The indication has been updated to include Alternate ACCESS.
- **New for 2022–23:** All policies and procedures were followed to ensure that students receive the supports or accommodations they require.

Note: Districts that want to receive adhesive student results labels with test score information for the MCA/MTAS must indicate it on the District Options page in Test WES by May 11. Student results labels are provided for every student tested at the end of August. These labels can be used on student permanent hard-copy files. The default option is set as no, and districts must change the selection to receive the labels. It is not possible to order these MCA/MTAS adhesive student results labels after May 11 but they will be available for the district to print in Published Reports (new for 2022–23).

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## ***GRR Resources and Updates***

The updated GRR user guide is now posted on the [Graduation Requirements Records \(GRR\)](#) page of the MDE website. MDE recommends that districts refer to the user guide while submitting requests, as there have been changes to the GRR system. The following are important reminders and updates:

- Beginning this year, ACT has a different cost structure for districts based on whether their students are participating in the test online or on paper. Districts will indicate by student whether the test was administered online or on paper. This means that there are new revised fields (if entering requests for reimbursement manually) or new codes (if entering requests for reimbursement via file upload) for subject and exam taken.
- If you have only a small number of students for whom to submit reimbursement requests, MDE recommends entering requests manually.
- If you will be uploading the requests, ensure that you download a new version of the template each year. To avoid errors when uploading, do not use a file uploaded in a previous year. **This is especially important this year as the template has been revised.** Refer to the user guide for the specific instructions for file uploads.
- Once reimbursement requests have been submitted, it is important to review the reimbursement reports in GRR. Because of the different cost structures for ACT based on administration mode, please verify the Claimed Student Detail Report and Estimated Student Amount Reports are correct based on the mode selected by your district.

Refer to [Upcoming Opportunities](#) for more information on the rescheduled GRR Q&A and recorded training.

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## ***MDE Employment Opportunity: Communications Specialist in Statewide Student Assessment***

Virginie Sanchez, the current communications specialist for statewide assessments, is relocating permanently to Belgium in late June.

The Academic Standards, Instruction, and Assessment division is currently seeking a communications specialist to work on the Communication Program Management team. This position will be responsible for creating communication materials and guides and will be the main contact for District Assessment Coordinators (DACs). If you are interested (or know someone who may be interested) in a new and challenging opportunity, see the complete position description and application instructions on the State of Minnesota Careers website. The Job ID is 64782, and **the posting is open until May 10**. Visit the [State of Minnesota Careers](#) website for more information and to apply.

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## ***Upcoming Opportunities***

### **Graduation Requirement Records (GRR) Q&A Session: Rescheduled**

Our Graduation Requirement Records (GRR) Q&A Session has been rescheduled for Tuesday, May 9, 2–3 p.m. [Register for the GRR Q&A Session](#). This session will focus on submitting reimbursement requests for college entrance exams using the GRR system. The prerequisite for the GRR Q&A session is completion of the Graduation Requirement Records (GRR) Training, which is posted in the [Training Management System \(TMS\)](#).

MDE collects questions from DACs prior to the event to help prepare and find relevant resources to share. After completing the prerequisites, please [submit questions for the GRR Q&A Session](#). Q&A Sessions will not be recorded nor will CEUs be provided as these are an additional support rather than a training event.

### **Alternate Assessment Coffee Break**

#### **Meet with Alternate Assessment Specialists to Give Feedback and Ask Questions**

The Academic Standards, Instruction and Assessment Division will host a series of virtual coffee break sessions for MTAS test administrators and special education staff to ask any questions around alternate assessment, share your feedback, and connect with other special education staff from across the state. Join us on **Tuesday, May 9, 4–5 p.m.** via Zoom: Alternate Assessment Coffee Break. Please [register for the coffee break](#). Bring your favorite beverage, along with your questions and any feedback you have, to share at this informal time focused around alternate assessment. This month we will be discussing feedback from the 2023 MTAS Administration, Individual Student Reports (ISR), and planning for next year. This is the last Coffee Break for this school year. The coffee breaks will begin for the 2023–24 school year in October 2023. For more information, contact [Alt.Assessment.MDE@state.mn.us](mailto:Alt.Assessment.MDE@state.mn.us).

## System Thinking about Assessment and Assessment Inventory Professional Learning Series

Have you been getting questions like, how are MCA and ACCESS results used? Or, why are MCA scores decreasing over the last few years? Communicating about standardized assessment results can be daunting, especially when connecting them to your district's vision for teaching and learning. Add to that a global pandemic, and it can easily feel overwhelming to sort out what exactly these results mean in context of your local curriculum and instruction goals.

Join us for a three-part series focused on stepping back to take stock of the assessments used in your district, what information they are providing, and how they can tell you more. Save the dates below and register on Zoom for each session to receive a calendar invite. All interested teaching and learning staff, district/school leaders, DACs, and educators are welcome to join!

### Assessment Inventory Session 1: Overview of balanced assessment systems and the inventory tool

- [Register for Session 1 held on Tuesday, May 16, 1–4 p.m.](#)
- Description: This session will provide a framework and resources you can bring back to your district in order to complete an assessment inventory.
- Session outcomes:
  - Gain an understanding of recent research calling for more [balanced assessment systems](#) that have clear purpose and produce useful information to continuously guide teaching and learning.
  - Have access to criteria and tools for evaluating your assessments as a system to guide teaching and learning, as well as for evaluating the quality and alignment of interim assessments.
  - Gain a clearer understanding about how the information either works together in a coherent system to improve teaching and learning, and/or where there might be gaps or redundancies in the information you are getting from your assessments.

### Assessment Inventory Session 2: Using the findings from an assessment inventory to adjust your balanced assessment system

- [Register for Session 2 held on Thursday, Aug. 3, 1–4 p.m.](#)

### Assessment Inventory Session 3: Developing a theory of action for your Balanced Assessment System

- [Register for Session 3 : Tuesday, Sept. 26, 1–4 p.m.](#)

## DRC Technical Enhancements for 2023–24 Q&A Webinar (corrected date and time)

WIDA and DRC will be hosting a webinar introducing upcoming changes and enhancements to DRCINSIGHT and the WIDAAMS platform arriving in July 2023. Topics that will be covered include:

- A new way to import student information into WIDAAMS
- A new look and feel for Student and Test Management
- New locations for ACCESS and WIDA Screener Online score reports
- Improvements to DRCINSIGHT secure student browser accessibility

The webinar will take place on **Thursday, May 18, from 1–2:00 p.m.** and a recording will be posted on the WIDA Secure Portal. More information, including the webinar link, can be found on the Webinars page of the [WIDA Secure Portal](#).

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## Tech Update

### Technical Bulletin – Confirm Managed Devices and Force Re-enrollment

Pearson support is aware that students assigned managed ChromeOS devices can bypass security settings by performing a series of complex processes that include resetting the device to factory settings (powerwashing or wiping) and then reconfiguring the device as unmanaged. Pearson **does not support unmanaged** ChromeOS devices for secure testing, and it is recommend to check each device's managed status before testing.

To prevent students from testing on unmanaged (non-secure) ChromeOS devices:

- Technology personnel (or proctors) should check the managed status of each device before testing.
- Technology personnel should also ensure that each device is set to force re-enrollment as a managed device after it's powerwashed/wiped and restarted for reuse.

The [Technical Bulletin](#) provides step-by-step instructions to complete the tasks outlined above. For questions, contact the Pearson help desk at 888-817-8659 or submit a [help desk request online](#).

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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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