AN UPDATE FROM ACADEMIC STANDARDS, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT—APRIL 28, 2021

QUICK LINKS	IMPORTANT DATES
• 2020–21 Statewide Assessment Reporting Timelines and Resources • Preliminary Student-Level Results for MCA and MTAS • Who to Contact • MCA/MTAS Reminders • Upcoming Opportunities	*May 21:* Testing window closes for MCA and MTAS *May 21:* Deadline to confirm in Test WES that all staff have completed required trainings and all students taking MTAS are eligible *May 24:* Deadline to ship MCA and MTAS secure materials back to Pearson *June 7:* Early student-level results for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS available in Test WES *June 7–June 25:* Posttest Editing in Test WES

2020–21 Statewide Assessment Reporting Timelines and Resources

The following article was shared with superintendents and school leaders on April 27.

Guidance from the U.S Department of Education requires that all reporting requirements are maintained this year. Unlike spring 2020, where no summary results were provided, all results provided to public schools and districts and reported on the Minnesota Report Card and the Data Center in past years will be provided this year.

With extended statewide assessment administration windows and a later Posttest Editing window, reporting timelines for this year's statewide assessment results will be delayed. The following are the planned dates for the release of results to districts in Assessment Secure Reports:

- District and School Student Results (DSR and SSR) files: no sooner than July 14

- Test Results Summary: no sooner than Aug. 4

Final dates these results will be available will be provided as soon as possible, but districts may use this information to adjust summer tasks and meetings that require the use of assessment results as needed. Note: the dates for public results release are still to be determined.

New Resources

MDE will be providing a *2021 Statewide Assessment Reporting Guidance* document that will provide guidance for districts with information on using 2021 results appropriately and in context. This document is planned to be available before the release of DSR/SSR files.

In addition, MDE is developing a series of one-page resources to accompany each part of the reporting process to provide additional support to district staff who will be using the results. These resources are intended to provide information about how to use the results, as well as specific contexts to consider for this year. The first resource about preliminary results is available on the District Resources page under Test Score Interpretation Resources and on the Testing 1, 2, 3 website. Additional resources for the DSR/SSR files, Test Results Summary, and public reporting will be provided ahead of their respective releases.

Preliminary Student-Level Results for MCA and MTAS

Information on preliminary student-level results is available in the *Procedures Manual*, starting on page 212; a new resource about preliminary results is also available on the District Resources page under Test Score Interpretation Resources and on the Testing 1, 2, 3 website (refer to the *2020–21 Statewide Assessment Reporting Timelines and Resources* above). It is up to the district to determine how preliminary student results will be shared.

- Preliminary student assessment results can be shared with students, families, and staff for instructional purposes. However, especially this year, it is important to use and share these results in context; for example, how did changes in the instructional schedule and learning mode affect student learning? It is recommended to wait until summer when summarized test results are available, if using them as one part of your decision-making for curriculum and instruction.

- 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. This includes any summarization determined by the district. If sharing preliminary results with staff, ensure that staff understand that "abiding by the embargo" means they cannot discuss or share results with others or the general public before the public release of results.

- While preliminary results may be shared with school board members, school officials, and charter school authorizers, all requirements outlined in *Sharing Students' Private Information Outside the School and District* in Chapter 11 of the *Procedures Manual* must be followed, including collection and retention of non-disclosure agreements for sharing results. Note: The requirement for a data privacy and non-disclosure agreement is specific to school officials and not all district and school staff. Districts should

follow their district data privacy policies and procedures for district and school staff who have access to embargoed results.

Who to Contact

Pearson

Contact the Pearson help desk at 888-817-8659 or submit a [Pearson help desk request](#) for the following questions:

- Additional orders for MCA/MTAS materials

- Completing tasks in PearsonAccess Next (e.g., creating test sessions or entering MTAS Scores)

- PearsonAccess Next user accounts

- Technology requirements/issues for TestNav*

*If you have any questions about technology, you can request assistance from the Level 2 technical team when contacting Pearson. If you call Pearson, the person answering the call will still collect some initial details before transferring the call. You may also utilize Pearson's [Technology Office Hours](#) to schedule a one-on-one virtual meeting with one of Pearson's Field Service Engineers. Note: If students are actively testing and you experience a technical issue, be sure to call the help desk and ask for Level 2 technical support rather than submitting a help desk request.

MDE

Contact MDE at mde.testing@state.mn.us for the following questions:

- Accommodations, linguistic supports, and general supports

- Decisions for alternate assessments

- High school Science MCA/MTAS participation

- Irregularities and misadministrations

- Minnesota Assessments guidance during COVID-19

- Minnesota test administration policies and procedures

- Precode Student Eligibility

- Scheduling

- Test codes (e.g., EXC-N, ABS)

- Test WES

- Training requirements

MCA/MTAS Reminders

Longer Testing Window

As announced in the *March 3, 2021 Assessment Update*, the MCA and MTAS testing windows have been extended through **Friday, May 21**. This extension applies to all subjects of MTAS and MCA (online and data entry), and allows for more flexibility in scheduling testing, while balancing the need to receive results prior to the start of the next school year.

Common Misadministrations

Consider reminding your Test Monitors to be diligent in order to prevent students logging in (starting or resuming their test) with the wrong test ticket. Be sure 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 *Script to Read to Students* included in the *Testing Directions*, which is required to be read before students begin testing.

Cell Phone and Device Policy Reminder

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, including the cell phone and device policy, prior to test administration. The full policy is included in Chapter 8 of the *Procedures Manual*, starting on page 171.

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.

New Students Not Appearing in PearsonAccess Next

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, review the *Student Tests Not Associated with the Student Organization* operational report in PearsonAccess Next (under Reports > Operational Reports in the Online Testing category). This report will include student information (i.e., MARSS/SSID, Name, Date of Birth), the student's current organization, the organization associated with the student test, and the test status (i.e., Testing or Attempt). Based on the test status, action may be needed by the DAC.

- Attempt: The student has submitted their test or it has been marked complete (with or without a test code) by the previous district. No action required from the DAC unless the student will finish the test. Refer to the *MCA/MTAS Irregularities* document for more information.

- Testing: The student has started the test but it has not been submitted or marked complete. The DAC must contact Pearson to move the test to your district.

More information about this operational report is available in the applicable [user guides](#) (i.e., *MCA Online Testing*, *MCA Data Entry*, *MTAS Data Entry).*

Reporting Suspected Item and Translation Errors and Technical Issues

If a student points out a test item that appears to have an error for MCA and MTAS, the Test Monitor or Test Administrator should instruct the student to continue the test and note the grade, subject, item number, section number (Science MCA only), student MARSS/SSID number, and information on how the online test was accessed (i.e., device and/or operating system). This same process is used if a student points out a translation that appears to be incorrect in paper translated word lists or the online pop-up translations. Following the test session, the Test Monitor should notify the District or School Assessment Coordinator about any test items or translations that appear to have an error.

If a technical issue occurs and a student receives an error message in an online test, the Test Monitor should write down the error message and number along with the student and test information specified above. If the technical issue prevents the student from responding to the item, the student should exit the test. For technical issues, the Test Monitor should contact district technology staff following the district's procedure, as needed, and provide information to the District or School Assessment Coordinator following the test session.

For all suspected item/translation errors or technical issues, the DAC contacts MDE or the service provider and gives the information collected by the Test Administrator or Test Monitor.

The content of the item itself should never be referenced, captured as an image, emailed within the school or district, or sent in a communication with MDE or the service provider because doing so is a security violation.

Upcoming Opportunities

Teaching and Learning Led by Evidence: Session 8 Rescheduled

This session has been rescheduled for Thursday, May 6 (previously planned for March 25). 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 after attending the session.

- **Session 8**: *How should individual MCA scores be interpreted and used?*
    - o **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.
    - o **Presenters**: Yufeng Berry and Kendra Olsen
    - o **Date**: Thursday, May 6, 3–4 p.m.

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

ACADEMIC STANDARDS, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT

Minnesota Department of Education

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.