mn DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Assessment Update

AN UPDATE FROM ACADEMIC STANDARDS, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT—MAY 12, 2021

QUICK LINKS	IMPORTANT DATES
- Testing Window Closing Next Friday 2020–21 Assessment Results Release Timeline - Revised Important Dates - Academic Standards, Instruction and Assessment Division - May New DAC Q&A Registration - MDE and DAC Coffee Break and Sharing: Save the Date - Electronic PDF Versions of Individual Student Reports (ISRs) Separated by Student - EDIAM Security Update Notice - Verifying and Manually Adding Students in Test WES - MCA/MTAS Irregularities - Test Security Notification and Test Administration Report	*May 19 (noon):* Last day to order test materials for MCA and MTAS *May 20:* Last day to complete Pretest Editing *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 7–25:* Posttest Editing in Test WES

Testing Window Closing Next Friday

Online Testing and Data Entry Deadlines

May 21 is the last day of the testing window for all subjects of MCA and MTAS. All online testing must be completed by 5 p.m. on Friday, May 21. All student responses in paper MCA test books and scores from MTAS must be entered online by 7 p.m. on Friday, May 21.

Note: Pearson does not scan any test materials for student responses or scores, so be sure **all MTAS scores have been entered in PearsonAccess Next** and **all student responses from paper MCA test books have been entered into a Data Entry form in TestNav** before the close of the testing window and shipping back the materials.

Additional Orders Window

The last day districts can order paper test materials for MCA/MTAS in PearsonAccess Next is **noon** on Wednesday, May 19.

For more information, consult the *Ordering Additional Test Materials* guide. For questions, contact the Pearson help desk at 888-817-8659 or submit a Pearson help desk request.

Enrollment Changes and Updating Information in Test WES

Precode files are sent to Pearson nightly each business day, Monday through Friday, from October through the end of the testing windows. Changes made in Precode Student Eligibility in Test WES on Friday will be sent Friday night to Pearson for loading on Monday.

- May 19 is the last day to submit MARSS enrollment updates for MCA online testing and data entry, and MTAS score entry. Once MARSS is submitted to MDE, that data is gathered overnight and is available the next business day in Test WES to make changes in Pretest Editing.

- May 20 is the last date to manually add students in Test WES and is also the final date to indicate accommodation/linguistic support codes for Reading, Mathematics, and Science MCA, and make test assignment changes (MCA/MTAS) in Test WES.

Refer to the *Verifying and Manually Adding Students in Test WES* article below for more information on manually adding a student to precode.

Returning MCA/MTAS Materials

Secure test materials must be returned to Pearson via UPS after the tests are administered and student responses and MTAS scores are entered online. These secure test materials do not need to be held until the end of the testing window if testing is complete.

To ensure materials are received by the deadline, please work with your schools to ensure that all materials are returned in a timely manner. Depending on your process, materials at schools may be sent to the district for return or shipped directly to Pearson. All materials must be shipped no later than Monday, May 24. If additional return labels are needed, contact the Pearson help desk at 888-817-8659 or submit a Pearson help desk request.

For more information, consult the *Returning Secure Test Materials* guide. For questions, contact the Pearson help desk at 888-817-8659 or submit a Pearson help desk request.

2020–21 Assessment Results Release Timeline

The information below was shared with superintendents and school leaders on May 10.

Preliminary results for MCA and MTAS are available within an hour of the assessment being completed. All assessment results are under embargo until public release. The public release of assessment results will be the week of August 30. **The exact date and timeline, including media release, will be shared with schools closer to the release date**.

Date	Description of Resources or Event
Wednesday, July 14	District and School Student Results (DSR and SSR) files available for district download. These files provide embargoed final individual student results.
Friday, Aug. 6	Test Results Summary provides embargoed summary results.
Thursday, Aug. 26	Individual Student Reports (ISRs) arrive in districts
Week of Aug. 30	Media receives access to embargoed accountability downloadable data file including state, all districts, and all school-level data Public release of assessment and accountability results, including school recognition, in Data Center Assessment results available in PearsonAccess Next (MCA/MTAS) and WIDA AMS (ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS)

Embargoed Student Results in Secure Reports

Final assessment results will be available in the District and School Student Results (DSR and SSR) files on July 14; these results will be under embargo until the public release of assessment results the week of August 30. **The exact date will be shared with schools closer to the release date**. During the embargo, districts can use final assessment results to prepare for questions from the media and local stakeholders. It is up to the district to determine whether or not to share embargoed assessment data with students, families, and staff for instructional purposes; however, preliminary or embargoed results cannot be discussed in public forums, 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.

Embargoed Test Results Summary

On Friday, August 6, embargoed assessment results will be available in Test Results Summary on the Secure Reports page. All assessment results are under embargo until the week of August 30. **The exact date will be shared with schools closer to the release date**. During the embargo, districts can use the final assessment results to prepare for questions from the media and local stakeholders. They may share the results with district teachers and staff for planning or instructional purposes, but they may not share the results publicly.

The Test Results Summary reports include final summary data for MCA, MTAS, ACCESS, and Alternate ACCESS.

Final Student Reports Delivery

Individual Student Reports (ISRs) for both MCA/MTAS and ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS for ELLs are scheduled to arrive in districts Thursday, August 26. Districts may prepare the ISRs for mailing but the ISRs cannot be mailed prior to the public release date.

Final 2020-21 Public Assessment Results Release

Assessment results will be released to the public of the week of August 30—**the exact date will be shared with schools closer to the release date**—in the [Minnesota Report Card](#).

Revised Important Dates

Based on the information provided in the previous article, a revised version of the *2020–21 Important Dates* has been posted to [PearsonAccess Next](#) with updated dates for test administration tasks through reporting.

Academic Standards, Instruction and Assessment Division

You may have noticed a change in our division's name in the *Assessment Update*. Over the past several months, Governor Walz's [Due North Plan](#) has guided discussions about how MDE can lead change to our education system so every child in Minnesota receives a high-quality education.

In order to better achieve those goals, MDE made some internal changes, including joining together the divisions of Academic Standards and Instruction and Statewide Testing to align to the first two corollary questions presented in *Learning by Doing* (DuFour, Dufour, Eaker, Many, Mattos, 2010):

- What do we want students to know and be able to do?
- How will we know if they know it?

This alignment also solidifies that standards and assessment are intertwined for student learning and is intended to communicate the tie between academic standards, instruction, and assessments.

May New DAC Q&A Registration

The May New DAC Q&A webinar will be held on Tuesday, May 25, from 2–3 p.m. Experienced DACs are also welcome to attend. Register for the New DAC Q&A Webinar. Details for joining the webinar will be provided once participants register.

The webinar will focus on entering and verifying reimbursement requests in the Graduation Requirements Records (GRR) system and wrapping up test administration. Submit your questions for the May webinar.

The following are the prerequisites:

- GRR: *Graduation Requirements Records (GRR) User Guide* and in the *MDE Graduation Requirements Records (GRR) Training*, which is posted in the Training Management System (TMS) on the District Assessment Coordinator tab under the MDE Recorded Webinars category.

- After test administration information: Chapter 10 of the *Procedures Manual*.

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MDE and DAC Coffee Break and Sharing: Save the Date

Because few new policies or resources were created this year, in place of feedback sessions, MDE will be holding the MDE and DAC Coffee Break and Sharing webinar on Tuesday, June 1, from 2–3:30 p.m. This time is intended for DACs to share information and experiences from this year's test administrations with their fellow DACs and MDE. MDE will also gather some information to inform next year's resources and trainings.

This Coffee Break is optional; simply a time to get together and share experiences and successes. MDE will not provide any training or new information, and it will not be recorded. Registration will be available in next week's *Assessment Update*.

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Electronic PDF Versions of Individual Student Reports (ISRs) Separated by Student

For 2021 MCA and MTAS results, a zipped file of electronic PDF versions Individual Student Reports (ISRs) separated by student will be available in PearsonAccess Next under Published Reports (i.e., Individual Student Reports – Separated by Student – District/School). These files will be available at the district- and school-level for both MCA and MTAS. Note: The zipped file will be formatted as a tar.gz file; ensure your district has software to open these files.

Posting ISRs separated by student allows districts to more easily load electronic PDF versions into their student information systems for secure electronic distribution to families. The following file naming conventions will be

used. Districts can use this information to configure their systems to load ISRs when they are available in late August.

CRITERIA	FILE NAMING CONVENTION
Local Use Data* value indicated in PearsonAccess Next	MCA_<CCYY>_<DDDD>_<TT>_<SSS>_GR<99>_<SubjectAbbrev>_Marss_<MARSS Number>_LocalUse_<LocalUseData>.pdf
Local Use Data value NOT indicated in PearsonAccess Next	MCA_<CCYY>_<DDDD>_<TT>_<SSS>_GR<99>_<SubjectAbbrev>_Marss_<MARSS Number>.pdf

*Note: the Local Use Data field will be truncated to remove leading/trailing blanks.

Additional information will be provided in the *Published Reports Quick Guide (2020–21)* later this summer. Contact Pearson at 888-817-8659 or submit a [Pearson help desk request](#) with any questions or concerns.

EDIAM Security Update Notice

On Thursday, May 6, a new version of MDE's EDIAM Security System was deployed to production. Any user who has created a web browser favorite (called bookmarks in some browsers) that links to the EDIAM login page instead of the application itself will have a broken favorite link after this new version is deployed. This is due to a problem with the web browser favorite, not with the EDIAM Security System.

A new document has been added to the [MDE Data Submissions page](#) under the Accessing Applications From Your EDIAM User Profile collapsible header with step-by-step instructions on how to correctly create a web browser favorite linked to an EDIAM-secured web application.

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:

- o 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.

- o 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.

- o 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.

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.

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).

Tech Update

Electronic PDF Versions of Individual Student Reports (ISRs) Separated by Student

Refer to the Electronic PDF Versions of Individual Student Reports (ISRs) Separated by Student article above for important information on the format and the naming convention of ISR files.