

AN UPDATE FROM ACADEMIC STANDARDS, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT—MAY 3, 2023

QUICK LINKS	IMPORTANT DATES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Testing Windows Closing • MDE Systems Upcoming Maintenance • Graduation Requirement Records (GRR) Q&A Session • Returning Secure Test Materials • Graduation Requirements Records (GRR) User Guide • MDE Employment Opportunity: Communications Specialist in Statewide Student Assessment (Repeat) • Upcoming Opportunities 	<p>May 5 <i>End of the MTAS (all subjects) and Mathematics and Reading MCA testing window</i></p> <p>May 9 (noon) <i>Deadline to order additional Science MCA test materials in PearsonAccess Next</i></p> <p>May 12 <i>End of Science MCA testing window</i></p>

Testing Windows Closing

Reading and Mathematics MCA and all MTAS (Reading, Mathematics, *and* Science)

Online Testing and Data Entry Deadlines

This Friday, May 5, is the last day of the testing window for Reading and Mathematics MCA and all MTAS subjects, **including Science MTAS**. Pearson does not score any paper test materials, so districts must ensure that all student responses or MTAS scores are entered online in order to be scored.

Districts must enter accommodations or change test assignments from MCA to MTAS in Test WES by this Thursday, May 4, in order for the updates to appear in PearsonAccess Next by the last day of the testing window.

Reading and Mathematics MCA

- All Reading and Mathematics MCA online testing must be completed by 5 p.m. **this Friday, May 5**.

- All student responses from Reading and Mathematics MCA paper test books must be entered in TestNav by 7 p.m. **this Friday, May 5.**
- Test codes (such as refusals) for all MCA subjects can be indicated in PearsonAccess Next until 7 p.m. on **Friday, May 12.**

Reading, Mathematics and Science MTAS

- Data for *all subjects* of MTAS (Reading, Mathematics, *and* Science) must be entered in PearsonAccess Next by 7 p.m. on **this Friday, May 5.**
- Test codes (such as refusals) for MTAS must be indicated in PearsonAccess Next by **Friday, May 5.**

MTAS Data Entry Reminders

If a student's MTAS on-demand report has an NC (Not Complete) code, this means that not all data was entered for that student's test. If the data was entered incorrectly, contact the Pearson help desk at 888-817-8659 to reset the test. Refer to the [MCA/MTAS Irregularities](#) for more details.

If a district wants a test code to be assigned to an MTAS record, it is important that the test code is indicated in PearsonAccess Next for MTAS. Since absent (ABS) and not enrolled (NE) test codes cannot be entered in PearsonAccess Next, a blank MTAS test for the applicable subject(s) must be submitted during the testing window and the applicable test code added during Posttest Editing. If a district waits until Posttest Editing, a test code can only be added to a blank assessment, **which defaults to MCA** and cannot be changed to MTAS at that time.

Science MCA Online Testing and Data Entry Deadlines

May 12 is the close of the testing window for Science MCA. All online testing for Science MCA must be completed by 5 p.m. on May 12. All student responses in paper Science MCA paper test books must be entered in TestNav by 7 p.m. on May 12.

Note: As indicated above, **this Friday, May 5,** is the last day to enter Science MTAS data.

Manually Adding Students and Updating Information in Test WES for the Science MCA

May 11 is the last day to manually add students in Test WES, and also the final date to change the send indicator for high school Science MCA and to indicate accommodation/linguistic support codes for the Science MCA in Test WES.

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MDE Systems Upcoming Maintenance

MNIT will shut down most MDE production web applications and report systems this **Friday, May 5, at 5 p.m.** All MDE applications and systems are expected to be back on Monday, May 8, at 8 a.m.

This maintenance will affect Test WES and Graduation Requirements Records (GRR). Districts won't be able to make any Pretest Editing or Precode changes in Test WES from 5 p.m. on Friday until MDE systems are back online the following Monday.

Note: This maintenance may affect the precode file scheduled to be sent to Pearson on Friday, May 5. Manually added students and changes made in Pretest Editing (such as accommodations, test assignment, linguistic supports, or send indicator) scheduled to be loaded to PearsonAccess Next on Monday may not be loaded until Tuesday, May 6.

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Graduation Requirement Records (GRR) Q&A Session

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.

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Returning Secure Test Materials

Secure test materials must be returned to Pearson via UPS after the tests are administered and student responses and MTAS data are entered online. These secure test materials do not need to be held until the end of the testing window if testing is complete. Note that MTAS Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI) and Data Collection Forms must stay on file at the district for one year.

To ensure materials are received by the deadline, work with your schools to confirm 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 directly to Pearson. All materials must be shipped no later than May 15.

For more information, access the [Returning Secure Test Materials](#) document. For questions, contact the Pearson help desk at 888-817-8659 or [submit a Pearson help desk request online](#).

Note: Pearson does not score any paper test materials. Ensure all MTAS data and student responses from paper MCA test books have been entered in PearsonAccess Next before shipping back the materials.

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Graduation Requirements Records (GRR) User Guide

MDE has been informed of an error on page 10 of the *Graduation Requirements Records (GRR) User Guide*, which is posted on the GRR page of the MDE system: The method code for ACT plus Writing (paper) is 0023.

A corrected version of the *Graduation Requirements Records (GRR) User Guide* will be posted by next week.

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MDE Employment Opportunity: Communications Specialist in Statewide Student Assessment (Repeat)

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

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.

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 the 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 held on Tuesday, Sept. 26, 1–4 p.m.](#)

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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.