

AN UPDATE FROM ACADEMIC STANDARDS, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT—AUGUST 4, 2021

QUICK LINKS	IMPORTANT DATES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Local Assessment and Advisory Committee Applications</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Reading Alternate MCA Test Specifications</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">2023–24 State Testing Calendar</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">District Testing Calendar</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Embargoed Test Results Summary</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Odds and Ends</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Upcoming Opportunities</a></li> </ul>	<p><b>Aug. 6:</b> Retrieve embargoed Test Results Summary reports in Secure Reports</p> <p><b>Aug. 25:</b> Access embargoed assessment downloadable data file including state, all districts, and all school-level data in Secure Reports</p> <p><b>Aug. 26:</b> Retrieve results in WIDA AMS</p> <p><b>Aug. 26:</b> Retrieve Individual Student Report (ISR) under Published Reports in PearsonAccess Next</p> <p><b>Aug. 26:</b> Individual Student Reports (ISRs) and other reports arrive in districts (unless district requested not to receive paper copies for MCA/MTAS)</p> <p><b>Aug. 26:</b> Media receives access to embargoed assessment downloadable data file including state, all districts, and all school-level data</p> <p><b>Aug. 27:</b> Public release of final assessment results in Data Center</p>

## Local Assessment and Advisory Committee Applications

Statewide Testing is advised by a variety of groups and organizations, each serving a specific role. The combined efforts of these groups contribute significantly to the program. One of these groups, the Local Assessment and Advisory Committee (LAAC), is looking for additional committee members.

This committee advises MDE on assessment and technical issues. In the past year, the committee has advised MDE on issues ranging from assessment redesign to testing calendar approval. Three virtually held

meetings (October, April, and July) are currently planned. Members may include superintendents, charter school directors, principals, District Assessment Coordinator (DACs), and district program coordinators.

To apply, use the *Statewide Testing Advisory Committee Application* posted on the [Statewide Testing](#) page under the Opportunities for Participation expandable header section. More details on the commitment for this committee are available in the *Statewide Testing Advisory Groups Overview*. Applications are due by Monday, Sept. 20.

[Back to Top](#)

## ***Reading Alternate MCA Test Specifications***

Following the 2020 revisions to the Minnesota K–12 Academic Standards in English Language Arts (ELA), the Reading Alternate MCA (formerly MTAS) will begin assessing these standards in the spring of 2026 for students with significant cognitive disabilities. In collaboration with a committee of Minnesota educators, MDE has drafted the [Reading Alternate Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment Test Specifications](#) to assist with the development of the new assessments. In addition to test specifications, the document includes extended benchmarks, which are based on the new Minnesota reading benchmarks but reduced in depth, breadth, and complexity.

Members of the public are encouraged to review the proposed test specifications and provide feedback through the [Reading Alternate MCA Test Specifications Feedback Survey](#). The survey will be open until Friday, Sept. 3.

Feedback from multiple perspectives, including language arts and special education teachers, is important in creating the best assessment possible for Minnesota students with significant cognitive disabilities. Please share this information with applicable district staff.

[Back to Top](#)

## ***2023–24 State Testing Calendar***

The draft *2023–24 State Testing Calendar* is posted on the [Statewide Testing](#) page, under the Testing Calendar expandable header. Send any comments to [mde.testing@state.mn.us](mailto:mde.testing@state.mn.us).

[Back to Top](#)

## ***District Testing Calendar***

Districts are required to post a comprehensive testing calendar on the district website before the first day of the school year; this information may also be posted on school-level websites if the district chooses. Districts may choose how to display the information (e.g., in a chart, a calendar format), but it should be presented in a way that is as easy to access as possible. Core requirements for the district testing calendar have not changed and are detailed in the [2020–21 Procedures Manual](#), starting on page 121.

The posting of a district testing calendar is a requirement of both state legislation and ESSA, and is required to be posted for the 2021–22 school year. If a district has not yet established specific dates when students will be testing, MDE recommends using last year’s planned dates as a starting place and then updating them as schedules are known or changed.

[Back to Top](#)

## ***Embargoed Test Results Summary***

Embargoed 2020–21 district and state summary results will be available in Test Results Summary on Aug. 6 in [Secure Reports](#). During the embargo, districts can use final assessment results, including the DSR/SSR files and reports created in Test Results Summary to prepare for questions from the media and local stakeholders. It is up to the district to determine whether or not to share embargoed results with students, families, and staff for instructional purposes. Embargoed results cannot, however, 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 public release.

### **Information Available in Test Results Summary**

Note the following about information available in Test Results Summary:

- No summary data or accountability was calculated for 2020 as there was very limited testing and very limited data due to COVID-19. Therefore, 2020 will not appear in the Year filter in Test Results Summary.
- There are also no accountability calculations for 2021. Therefore, under the Students Included filter in Test Results Summary, the “Students Included in Accountability” option will not produce any information. Use only the “All Tested” option to run reports.

### **Additional Resources**

The following resources are, or will soon be, available to support districts with using and understanding the results:

- The first part of the [2021 Statewide Assessment Reporting Guidance](#), located under Test Score Interpretation Resources, provides guidance for districts with information on using 2021 results appropriately and in context. The second part is planned to be available near the end of August, prior to the public release of results.
- The [Revised 2020–21 Important Dates](#) provides an updated timeline for the release of results.
- Chapter 11 of the [Procedures Manual](#) provides guidelines for using the assessment data and abiding by the embargo.
- The [Test Results Summary User Guide](#) provides information about the content and file format of reports.

- The [Statewide Assessments: Using Test Results Summary](#), located under Test Score Interpretation Resources, is a one-page resource that provides information for district staff about using these summary results for statewide assessments, including specific contexts to consider for this year.
- The recording of the *New DAC Reporting Training 2: Test Results Summary Reports and Public Reporting* training and handouts will be available in the [Training Management System \(TMS\)](#) on the District Assessment Coordinator tab under MDE Recorded Webinars on Friday, Aug. 6.

[Back to Top](#)

## ***Odds and Ends***

Virginie Sanchez, who answers the majority of the phone calls and emails districts have about assessments, will be out of the office Aug. 6–13. During that time, other assessment staff will answer questions from districts sent to [mde.testing@state.mn.us](mailto:mde.testing@state.mn.us) each day, but you may see a delay.

[Back to Top](#)

## ***Upcoming Opportunities***

### **WIDA Webinar: Get Familiar with the Redesigned WIDA Secure Portal**

The [WIDA Secure Portal is getting updated](#). The [Get Familiar with the Redesigned WIDA Secure Portal Q&A Webinar](#) will be on Tuesday, Aug. 10, 1–2:30 p.m.. The webinar will describe what is changing, when it will be changing, and relevant information to prepare for the changes. The webinar will also preview the redesigned portal to show participants how to find the training, professional learning, and resources.

[Back to Top](#)

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Minnesota Department of Education

[education.mn.gov](http://education.mn.gov) > Districts, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Statewide Testing

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